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CONFIDENTIAL.

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424

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RESPECTING

ASIATIC TURKEY.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6654.]

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April to June 1895.

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ERRATA.

Page 92, Inclosure 5 in No. 7, line 4. For "Eomes Bey" read "Eumer Bey."
Page 125, line 9. For "Governor-General of Tunis" read "Resident at Tunis."
Page 206, No. 152, line 1. For "12th instant" read "12th ultimo."
Page 370, No. 314, 6th line from end. For "Bayakdéré" read "Buyoukdéré."

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CONFIDENTIAL.

Further Correspondence respecting Asiatic Turkey.

[In continuation of Confidential Paper No. 6654.]

No. 1.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 1.)

(No. 185.)

Constantinople, March 27, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, giving an extract from a letter of Dr. Jewett reporting the passage of Tahsin Pasha, ex-Vali of Bitlis, through Sivas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 1.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, March 12, 1895.

Sir,

DR. JEWETT, in his letter of the 5th instant, reports as follows:—

"Tahsin Pasha, ex-Vali of Bitlis, passed through here on the 22nd February. I regret that I did not see him. He had an escort of about forty zaptiehs, and from quite reliable Turkish sources I am told it was because sixty Kurds, divided in fourteen companies, were distributed along the route watching for an opportunity to kill him because he had been instrumental in killing certain Armenians who were serfs of the Kurds."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 2.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 1.)

(No. 186.)

Constantinople, March 27, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, giving an extract from a letter of Dr. Jewett relating to the looting of a village in the Sakisla Kaïmakamlik of the Sivas Vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 2.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, March 12, 1895.

Sir,

DR. JEWETT, in his letter of the 5th instant, relates thus the circumstances of an incident which occurred at a village in the Sakisla Kaïmakamlik of the Sivas Vilayet:—

"The following, which shows the fictitious character of much of the revolutionary movement, I think is practically true. About three months ago some Armenians and Circassians robbed a rich Armenian in a village of Sakisla Kaïmakamlik. The Armenian complained, but nothing was done. Later he secured abundant evidence who the robbers were. The Armenian robbers were arrested, Circassians not. To escape punishment they said that the Armenian whom they had robbed and others of the village were revolutionists, and that he had asked them to come to his house and get arms and ammunition.

"On the 13th February, at night, the village was surrounded by 400 to 600 zaptiehs, coldjees, and Turkish villagers. They searched the village, found only three rifle cartridges and eight to ten old-fashioned paper cartridges, and stole everything they could carry off from Yorgans to Bulgoor. The village is kept under surveillance to prevent the affair being reported.

"A villager brought the news to-day, and will report it to the Archbishop to-morrow."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 3.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 188. Confidential.)

Constantinople, March 27, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, containing the statement of one Suleiman, a Turkish ex-sergeant, in regard to the massacre of Armenians at Sassoon.

I have telegraphed to Mr. Graves that I presume he has informed Mr. Shipley, and instructed him to forward the account to him if he has not already done so.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 3.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)

Erzeroum, March 16, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a statement made by another ex-sergeant in the Turkish army to the same gentleman who supplied me with that of Moyloud Agha, which formed the second inclosure to my Confidential despatch of the 2nd instant.

There can be no doubt whatsoever as to the genuineness of these statements, notwithstanding possible slight inaccuracies of detail, and as Mr. Shipley now reports that no trustworthy Mussulman evidence is to be expected before the Commission of Inquiry at Moush, they may prove to be the only true versions of the Sassoon massacres which we shall obtain from the Turkish point of view.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 3.

Statement of Turkish ex-Sergeant Suleiman.

HE had been several times into the Sassoon district, escorting tax-gathers from Moush, and knew the villages well. The year before last, when fighting took place at Talori, his battalion was sent to Merghémouzan, and the Shatakh villagers, being afraid of the Kurds, brought presents to the officers and implored their protection: Bedo, the Headman of Ghelié-Guzan, bringing a large sum in gold to the Major Commanding.

Last year, 1894, when news came of fighting between Kurds and Armenians, his battalion was again sent to Merghémouzan, taking two mountain guns. Some skirmishing was going on, and the troops had orders to supply the Kurds with ammunition, but took no part in the fighting. The Armenians also came to them and asked for help, bringing presents, but were driven away with blows.

Meanwhile, more troops were coming up and more Kurds, under the Sheikh of Zilan, the tribes being Bekirauli, Badikauli, Velikauli, Khiyauli, and Ruskotauli; until there were fourteen or fifteen battalions and about 20,000 Kurds, besides Haidarauli and Hassannauli Hamidiyés, who, however, did not come beyond Moush.

Then Colonel Ismail Bey came from Moush, and took command. The day but one after his arrival there was a parade of all the troops, and Ismail Bey, accompanied by his Secretary and an official in plain clothes, said to be the Vekil of the Mushir (?), came forward with a Firman, which was read aloud by the Secretary. The Firman said that the Armenians were in rebellion against the Sultan, and were to be punished "with blood" as an example to others. Then Ismail Bey made a speech, telling the troops to destroy the villages with fire, and to put the rebels to the sword, and that they might do as they liked, so long as they destroyed everything that had life. This was the Sultan's order. Then the troops cheered, and were dismissed. The same evening three battalions were ordered to attack Shenik-Semal, against which the Kurds had been fighting ineffectually. When the villagers heard that troops were coming they at once began to fly. "How could they possibly dare to resist the army?"

Two guns were trained on the village, and several shells fired into it, killing some of the flying Armenians in the street. Many others took refuge in the school-house, which was afterwards attacked, and its inmates killed. The village was set on fire, partly by shells and partly by plundering Kurds, and many perished in the flames.

Next day the troops advanced on Ghelié-Guzan, and waited a day or two while the Kurds attacked the villagers, and wore out their resistance. Then the order was given, as before, to bring up the cannon, with the same result as at Semal-Shenik, only there were many more people, and the slaughter was greater. At daybreak the troops entered the village, and a good many villagers who remained were killed or burnt in the houses. The door of one large house resisted all attacks until a gun was brought up, and it was battered down with shells; an old man and a large number of women and children, who were within, were killed by Kurds and some soldiers, but most of the troops were forbidden to join in the pillage, and ordered to pursue the fugitives, the officers shouting, "Kess! kess! Kill with the bayonet! don't fire!" After awhile the pursuit was stopped, but he thinks 600 to 800 persons were killed in the attack and pursuit. Some of the fugitives took refuge in the oak-scrub, in which a daily battue was made while the troops remained at Ghelié-Guzan. The dry brushwood was drenched in places with petroleum, and then fired. Those who stayed in the wood were burned, and those who came out were killed.

Others fled to a peaked mountain, where there were already a number who had escaped before. This was blockaded by a part of the troops and by Kurds, the rest remaining in camp near Ghelié-Guzan. But two battalions, with six or eight guns, were sent over the mountain to attack Talori.

After some days the Colonel ordered them no longer to kill those they caught, but to make them prisoners, and one or more of these prisoners was sent by him with an offer of terms to the Armenians on the mountain, and the troops and Kurds were ordered to cease firing on them. On this some of the people on the Antok mountain began to come down and give themselves up.

Among the first was the priest, Der Ohannes of Semal, whom he knew well, with a number of others, chiefly women and children, all starving. The Colonel received them kindly, and ordered them to be given food; then he retired to his tent with the

Sheikh of Zilan and other officers. Presently a Captain came out, and told off forty of the strongest Armenians to dig three pits, about 9 feet deep and 12 feet in diameter, which was done by sunset; and, meanwhile, about 200 more Armenians had come down from the mountain.

There was a parade at sunset, after which the Colonel ordered the Armenians to be brought before him. He sat with the Sheikh of Zilan in front of his tent. Then the Colonel asked who was the leader of the Armenians, and the priest said it was he. The Sheikh, being consulted by the Colonel as to what should be done with him, said, "Shave him, and put out his eyes." So a barber was called, and he was shaved. After that his eyes were put out, and a rope was tied round his neck, soldiers jerking him from both sides, and making him dance. At last the Colonel said, "Finish him!" and soldiers thrust their bayonets into him, lifting him into the air, and then letting him fall on the ground. All this he told with great gusto, laughing heartily while describing the priest's appearance and struggles.

From this point his story as to the details of the nocturnal butcheries of prisoners agrees exactly with that of Meyloud. He himself was told off to act as butcher, and says that he bayonetted three persons one night in particular, besides others on different occasions. He was not with the troops who attacked the remnant on Antok-Dagh, but he heard they were guided up a difficult path to the top, and killed all whom they met. A number of Armenians who had taken refuge in a deep cleft, out of which they could not escape, were massacred, and while this was being done, many others managed to scatter and escape over the rocks.

He puts down the whole slaughter at about 5,000 persons, and says that if the Mushir had not arrived and stopped it, they would have killed out all the Christians as far as Siirt.

He remained with his battalion for a month longer at Ghelié-Guzan, guarding a number of women and children who were brought in later, and lodged mostly in one large house; and he declares that no injury was done to any of these.

No. 4.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 189.)

Pera, March 27, 1895.

My Lord,

ON Thursday last, the 21st instant, I was invited to take "iftar" (the evening meal during Ramazan) at the Palace of Yildiz, and was subsequently received in private audience by the Sultan, who honoured me with a long conversation on Armenian affairs.

His Imperial Majesty began by saying he had heard with much surprise that it was generally believed that large numbers of Armenians were in prison on political charges. As far as he knew, the only places where political disturbances had occurred and arrests been made were Yozgat, Cæsarea, and Tokat. He had, however, pardoned most of those implicated, and imagined that the present number of political prisoners was about 30, certainly not 700, as was represented. He was naturally inclined to clemency. He had pardoned men who had made attempts on his life, and had in the last few days issued orders for the release of all Armenian ecclesiastics imprisoned for political reasons.

I congratulated His Majesty on this wise measure, but said he was misinformed as to the number of Armenians in prison. The provincial authorities were in the habit of making wholesale arrests on utterly frivolous and baseless charges, and many persons remained in prison for long periods without knowing of what they were accused. The effect on public opinion was naturally deplorable.

His Majesty said he could not believe that such a state of things existed. Political arrests could only be made after political disturbances, and such disturbances, as he had already said, had only occurred in three towns. Neither could he believe that the authorities would allow Armenians to remain in prison without trial. Such a proceeding would be distinctly illegal. In spite of my reiterated statements that there was hardly a town in Asia Minor where the prison was not full of Armenians, His Majesty merely repeated that he was lost in astonishment, and felt it was like a dream.

I then said I had that morning received an instruction from Her Majesty's Government to remonstrate against the arrests which were daily taking place, and handed to His Majesty a Turkish translation of an extract of your Lordship's despatch No. 114 of the 16th March.

The Sultan read this document attentively, and again expressed his astonishment,

saying that if such things occurred it was without his knowledge. He was convinced there was great exaggeration in the stories circulated by Armenians, and believed in England. He then asked what your Lordship meant by the expression "other offences." Naturally, Armenians must be punished for offences against common law.

I said that persons were often arrested for non-political offences on insufficient evidence, and detained in prison merely because they were Armenians. As an instance, I mentioned a case of which I had only heard that morning, though it had occurred a few years ago, in which the whole male population of an Armenian village in the Government of Van had been arrested because the bodies of two Kurds had been found in the neighbourhood. No evidence was ever produced against any of the men, yet they remained in prison for a long period, and some of them died there. His Majesty said that of course malefactors must be punished. The Turks could not sit with folded hands while the Armenians broke their heads, and the authorities must do their best to discover the guilty. He would, however, inquire into this case, and punish any official who should prove to have acted illegally.

I then referred to the Armoudan prisoners, and specially to the case of Dr. Pashayan, which has recently been brought to my notice. I pointed out to His Imperial Majesty that these prisoners had been arrested two or three years ago; that they had been detained in prison without trial till December last, and that their case had not yet come before the Court of Cassation. The Sultan again expressed incredulity, but I assured him that reports of similar cases reached me almost daily from Her Majesty's Consular officers, who could have no object in making unfounded charges. In the face of these reports, it was impossible not to believe that the Armenians suffered from oppression and injustice.

His Majesty assured me that they had always been treated with clemency and justice by himself and his forefathers; but I replied that, while doing full justice to the humane intentions of the Ottoman Sovereigns, I feared that those intentions were not always executed by the provincial authorities.

The Sultan then said that of late years the Armenians had not behaved well, but that, unfortunately, the false or exaggerated statements they circulated met with full credence in England. He warned me that the present state of things would be fatal to the continuance of good relations between the two Powers. His Mussulman subjects could not remain indifferent to the injuries they received at the hands of Armenians, encouraged and protected, as it seemed, by England. They were deeply affected by our hostility, and he himself, as a Mussulman, could not but resent the attitude of Her Majesty's Government. He desired me to let your Lordship know that it would be well to contradict the false intelligence which appeared in the press, and to cease from protecting the Armenians.

I replied that public indignation in England had been aroused by these continual arrests of Armenians without cause. I believed that the release of the ecclesiastics would have a good effect, and I trusted that His Imperial Majesty would extend the measure to the other political prisoners.

The Sultan then recounted to me the recent incident at Tokat, reported to your Lordship in my telegram No. 101 of the 22nd March. According to his information, the Armenians began the disturbance in the bazaar; they then collected in the church and fired on the Moslems, twenty of whom were wounded, one Armenian being killed. Order had been restored with difficulty by the Military Commandant. He had commanded the Governor of Sivas to proceed to the spot, make an impartial inquiry, and punish the guilty.

He then spoke at great length of his relations with the Armenian Patriarch, and of the complaints made by the latter. He had been urged not to confirm the election on account of the unwise utterances of the Patriarch when a Bishop, but had thought it better to forget the past, and had received his Beatitude in audience with every consideration, bidding him exhort his flock to loyalty to their Sovereign. Subsequently, he had sent to ask him what were the grievances of which the Armenians complained.

His Beatitude had replied that there were three:—

1. That the Censor had tampered with the text of the Bible.
2. That a chalice had been broken by soldiers.
3. That some Armenians had been beaten in prison, though innocent of the crimes of which they were accused.

The Sultan said all good Moslems regarded the Bible as a sacred book, as well as the Koran, and it was highly improbable that any one would venture to alter the text; should he find any one had done so, he would "take him by the ear" and see he was properly punished.

With regard to the desecration of the chalice, he said such vessels were generally kept in churches. How could soldiers get at them there? No doubt the sacred vessel had been broken by some drunken rascal.

If, however, there had been a disturbance in the church, and soldiers who had been called in to restore order had broken the chalice in the general confusion, the Armenians could not complain; such incidents were unavoidable.

As for the Armenians said to have been beaten in prison, His Majesty simply said the case was impossible.

"I am lenient as a Sovereign," he said, "and a humane man. I have abolished corporal punishment in my army, though it still exists in European countries. How is it possible that any one should be beaten in prison? If any scoundrel has dared to do this he shall be punished. I am inquiring into the case, but have not yet heard the result from the Porte."

I replied that I thought His Majesty had misunderstood the Patriarch's statements. According to a report I had heard, he had divided his grievances under three heads:—

1. Those concerning religious matters;
2. Those connected with the ancient privileges of the Church; and
3. The general condition and treatment of the Armenians.

His Beatitude had, no doubt, given the three cases mentioned by His Majesty as examples of the three classes of grievances, but did not, I felt sure, intend them to be taken as an exhaustive list.

The indignation aroused in England by recent events was, I continued, strong and sincere. The English people felt they could no longer share the responsibility for such a state of things, and Her Majesty's Government would be obliged to insist on the introduction of reforms which would secure a better administration, and protect the Armenians from the Kurds.

His Majesty replied that the laws promulgated by his uncle and grandfather were amply sufficient to insure good government, if properly executed. He proposed, however, to improve the existing administration in three ways: Firstly, by increasing the number of gendarmes or soldiers in places where Kurds and Armenians were in conflict; and, secondly, by sending better men as Judges. Formerly, few Turks went abroad to study, and in Turkey they had hitherto had no opportunity of acquiring a proper judicial training. Such training was, however, now provided in the schools he had established. He added that he feared the indolence of his officials was responsible for much maladministration. In Europe he had heard the Courts sometimes sat till late at night, whereas Turkish Judges were always anxious to leave early. He would, however, see to this. Thirdly, he proposed to introduce a certain number of Armenian functionaries into the public service in some parts of the Empire, but the execution of this reform must be gradual, and depend on the good behaviour of the Armenians themselves. Under these circumstances, there would be no necessity to demand reforms of the Porte.

I replied that we considered in England that no class was likely to obtain the treatment to which it was entitled unless it had some voice in the direction of affairs. For this reason we had gradually extended the suffrage in England, and we felt that in Turkey the Armenians would never be justly treated until they were admitted to a larger share in the Administration. I accordingly ventured to represent to His Majesty that they ought to receive appointments in all branches of the Administration in proportion to their numbers.

The Sultan said, apparently unconscious that he was somewhat contradicting himself, this was already the case. There were Armenian Mudirs and Kaimakams, Armenians in the police—in fact, they had more than their proper share in the Administration. He had had more than one Christian Minister for Foreign Affairs; his Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs was an Armenian. Every day in his Palace he saw forty or fifty Armenian employés. He offered to give a statement showing the number of Armenians in the public service.

I said I feared the practice in the provinces did not agree with His Majesty's theories, and that the number of Armenian officials was small. Unless guarantees were given for the execution of reforms, I could hold out no hope that Her Majesty's Government would be satisfied.

His Majesty said that after Bairam he intended to appoint a Commission to inquire into the grievances of the Armenians, and consider what reforms were necessary.

I explained to His Majesty that my object in speaking so plainly with him had been to fulfil the duty of a Representative of a friendly Power, and that my only desire was to promote the welfare of his Empire.

His Majesty thanked me, and said he had taken my advice about the Sassoon

Commission, although its departure had been delayed in order to choose good men. But he again urged me to tell your Lordship that the question should be treated with greater moderation, and an attempt made to restrain the violent attacks of the press. What had already occurred was a source of grief to His Majesty, and a continuation of such a policy would inevitably alienate the sympathy of Turkey. As long as the Armenians, encouraged as they were by England, maintained their present attitude, it would be impossible to give them any share in the Administration. Before that could be done, they must behave properly.

His Majesty then thanked me again for what I had said, and asked me to reflect on what had passed between us. He would do the same, and, after Bairam, intended to have a further long conversation with me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 5.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 1.)

(No. 190.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, March* 28, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting political excitement among Armenians near Suedia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 5.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Aleppo, March* 11, 1895

I HAVE the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received letters from Mr. Sanders, an American gentleman, now travelling in the neighbourhood of Antioch, from which I learn that there is some political excitement among the Armenians in certain villages near Suedia, and this gentleman attributes it to the operations of the Armenian Revolutionary Society, which had established a footing in the neighbourhood since last summer. Mr. Sanders adds that the authorities are evidently watching the movement, as they frequently send gendarmes to search the villages for fire-arms.

On the 7th instant Mr. Sanders wrote as follows from Soghoonlook, a village near Antioch:—

"At Antioch I was able to obtain my information in such a way that I was perfectly free to write about it. Here, however, the people have divulged their innermost thoughts in full confidence that I will not repeat anything, or bring them into trouble. The villages which have become involved in this revolutionary movement are four on this side of the Suedia Plain, viz., Bitias, Kehoosé, Soghoonlook, and Hadi Bey, also Kessab, on Jebel Akra. I should say that Antioch is also involved, though to a very small degree.

"In these villages nearly all the males are enrolled as members of the Society. They have purchased shot-guns in large numbers, and ammunition. There is something like a panic in these parts on the subject of a possible Moslem uprising, but I should judge that this idea has been carefully cultivated, and, except for this fear, I should say that the movement would dissolve of itself. So far the movement has been unattended by anything serious.

"These foolish people have been led to believe that armed forces will come here to help them, but I have considerably sobered them by my assurance that any such action on the part of foreign Governments is utterly impossible, and that, if done privately, the Government concerned would interfere to prevent it. They have been taught also that our American Government would step in and help them by armed intervention, but I quieted them by explaining the attitude of the United States towards European questions.

"Another matter has excited them greatly. They believe their women are in danger of outrage from the Turkish troops. Their feelings have been worked up by the fact that the Turks beat a few women at Keboosé, whose husbands had run away. If it were possible, without letting the Government know the facts, to induce them to issue an order that tax-collectors, zaptiehs, or soldiers were on no account to touch the women, it would, I think, ease the situation considerably.

"In brief, the position is this. These villagers have been worked up to believe that they are in real danger, and actually have taken steps which most of them were very unwilling to take.

"If the Turkish Government deals gently with them, probably nothing will come of it, otherwise there will certainly be bloodshed."

I have requested Mr. Saunders to make it convenient to visit Aleppo as soon as possible, that I may hear anything further he may have to tell me upon the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 6.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 192.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, March 28, 1895.

I CALLED on the Grand Vizier on the afternoon of the 21st, and drew His Highness' attention to the bad effect produced in England by the wholesale arrests of Armenians, which for some time past have been usual. I stated it was high time the Turkish Government should understand the danger of the situation, and seriously endeavour to stem the tide of popular opinion in England and Europe generally, where the Porte had hardly a friend left.

His Highness, who was evidently in a very nervous state, said he quite understood the danger of the situation, and asked what could be done to satisfy the British public.

I handed him a translation of parts of your Lordship's despatch No. 114 of the 16th March, and urged upon him the necessity of liberating the Armenians now in prison without delay, and of ceasing to make further wholesale arrests.

He replied that the Sultan had already issued an Iradé ordering that all Armenian ecclesiastics now under sentence should be brought to Constantinople with the papers relating to their cases, and that all who were not found guilty of murder or other non-political crimes should be set at liberty. They would have to take the oath of allegiance, and it would be intimated that they should not be appointed to important posts. The Iradé was dated the 14th March, and had already been communicated to the Minister of Public Worship and Justice. He added, confidentially, that he was taking steps to advise the Sultan to grant a general amnesty to all Armenian political offenders, and had some hopes of success.

I replied that justice rather than clemency was required, and suggested that a Commission should, without delay, visit all the prisons, and be given full powers to discharge all persons detained on frivolous charges or on insufficient evidence.

The Grand Vizier said he preferred his own plan because immediate action was necessary, whereas the measure I suggested would involve months of delay.

His Highness then said he could not understand how England could continue to vilify Turkey, her traditional friend and ally. I reminded him I had warned the Porte as early as November last of the tremendous effect which the Sassoon occurrences would have in England, and had advised that immediate measures should be taken to reassure public opinion.

His Highness replied that my advice had been followed, and the Commission sent, but the attacks in the press still continued, and Her Majesty's Government were dealing very hardly with the Porte.

I replied we could do nothing unless Turkey would help herself: "Aide-toi et Dieu t'aidera." He admitted this, but again begged I would endeavour to prevent the growth of hostile feeling in England.

We then spoke of the Sassoon Commission, and his Highness asked if I was convinced that massacres had taken place. I said that, without wishing to prejudice the finding of the Commission, I could feel little doubt that helpless and unarmed Armenians had been killed in cold blood by Turkish soldiers. His Highness seemed much disconcerted by this answer, and inquired if the Commission was working well. I replied that the Turkish members seemed to raise unnecessary delays and obstacles, and that it would be better if the Commission would listen to the suggestions of the Delegates with regard to witnesses and other matters. The object of the inquiry was rather to find out whether massacres had taken place, and, if so, who was responsible for them, than to ascertain whether there had been Armenian agitators, such as Murad, at Taluri and Sassoon.

The Grand Vizier then asked me to recall, in accordance with the prohibition issued by the Ottoman Government, two correspondents who were now telegraphing false news from Erzeroum. I replied I had never engaged to enforce that ill-advised prohibition, and had no power to recall the gentlemen in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 7.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 81.)
My Lord,

St. Petersburgh, March 28, 1895.

I CALLED upon Prince Lobanoff this afternoon, and read to him Sir Philip Currie's telegrams Nos. 98, 99, and 102, which your Lordship did me the honour to forward to me in your despatches Nos. 79 and 80 of the 22nd and 23rd instant.

Prince Lobanoff followed them with apparent interest, and thanked me for communicating them to him. He was awaiting a report from the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, who had, as his Excellency had informed me on a previous occasion, reported that he was in consultation with his English and French colleagues as to the best method of introducing reforms into Armenia. His Excellency was anxious to learn the proposals which the Ambassadors would make to settle this very difficult question. He believed that he was right in stating that there were but three districts in Asia Minor where the Armenians formed the majority of the population, viz., Bitlis, Angora, and Alexandretta. But these places were far apart, and could scarcely be united in one province. Armenians were scattered throughout the country, indeed, throughout the world, and there was no one locality which could be described as Armenia.

In the case of the Lebanon, it had been found possible to delimitate a province and to appoint a Christian Governor, but the analogy did not apply in the case of the Armenians, and he did not at present see how it would be possible to introduce reforms which would satisfy the Armenians, unless, indeed, we were prepared to undertake the reform of the administration of the whole of Turkey in Asia. The Hatti-Humayoun of 1856, and more especially the Treaty of Berlin, gave the Powers the right to insist on reforms, but the difficulty was to give practical shape to these reforms, and he was, therefore, very much interested to know the result of the consultation of the Ambassadors at Constantinople on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 8.

Telegram from Beyrout, March 14, 1895.—(Communicated by Rustem Pasha, April 1.)

UNE discussion s'étant élevée dans le bazar de Beyrouth entre un vieux prêtre Grec et un enfant Musulman, un boutiquier Musulman, voisin de l'enfant, est intervenu dans la querelle et, après avoir saisi le prêtre par la barbe, l'a renversé.

Cet incident a produit dans la ville une certaine émotion; mais elle s'est calmée lorsque l'on a su que l'auteur du délit avait été arrêté et déféré aux Tribunaux.

Les Consuls de Russie et de Grèce sont allés remercier le Gouverneur des mesures qu'il avait prises à ce sujet.

No. 9.

Saïd Pasha to Rustem Pasha.—(Communicated to Foreign Office, April 1.)

Constantinople, le 26 Mars, 1895.

(Télégraphique.)

UN télégramme du Gouverneur de Bitlis annonce que vingt-cinq Arméniens ont maltraité une femme nommée Zéineb, dans le village de Kertakoum, voisin de Moush. Cette femme est une Arménienne qui s'était convertie à l'Islamisme l'année dernière à la suite des démarches d'usage faites devant le Conseil Administratif de Moush. C'est au moment où cette femme faisait ses prières qu'elle a été victime de cette agression.

Deux Musulmans qui étaient venus à son aide ont été aussi battus et blessés.

Quinze des Arméniens qui ont pris part à cette agression ont été mis à la disposition de la justice.

No. 10.

Saïd Pasha to Rustem Pasha.—(Communicated to Foreign Office, April 1.)

Constantinople, le 29 Mars, 1895.

(Télégraphique.)

DES avis reçus du Gouverneur de Bitlis portent que le nommé Serkis, Moukhtar (ancien) du village de Kekerli (district de Boulanik), de concert avec dix Arméniens, ont mis obstacle à ce que le Muézin du village recitât la prière habituelle. Ce fait est confirmé par la déclaration de sept Musulmans et de trois Arméniens.

Serkis lui-même a reconnu la vérité de ce qui lui était reproché.

Cet acte constituant une entrave à l'exercice de la religion Musulmane, le dit Serkis a été arrêté et ses complices sont cherchés.

No. 11.

Saïd Pasha to Rustem Pasha.—(Communicated to Foreign Office, April 1.)

Constantinople, le 31 Mars, 1895.

(Télégraphique.)

SUIVANT les dépositions faites par quelques prêtres et Notables Arméniens de Tokat le motif qui aurait induit leurs coreligionnaires à fermer leurs boutiques et à se rassembler à l'Evêché serait le mauvais traitement infligé par trois gardiens du bazar à un nommé Osguan à la suite d'une querelle concernant un tapis; puis à une querelle survenue entre un Lieutenant de l'armée venu d'Erzingian et un Arménien; et enfin à ce qu'un étudiant aliéné s'était promené dans le bazar, étant armé, et aurait proféré des menaces contre les Arméniens. Ces derniers auraient cru à la suite de ces incidents que la sécurité de la ville n'était pas assurée.

On a cependant lieu de croire que les Arméniens avaient obéi au mot d'ordre répandu par quelques agitateurs.

Les Chrétiens appartenant aux rites Grec, Catholique, et Israélite avaient également fermé leurs boutiques; mais en voyant qu'il ne s'agissait que d'une panique n'ayant aucune cause réelle, ils les ont rouvertes et vaquent actuellement à leurs affaires.

Il a été constaté qu'il y a eu du côté des Arméniens un homme tué et onze blessés légèrement, et un blessé du côté des Musulmans.

Vingt Musulmans prévenus d'avoir participé aux désordres sont recherchés par la justice et le plus grand nombre a déjà été arrêté. Cinq Arméniens sont également entre les mains de la justice. L'instruction se poursuit avec la plus grande impartialité.

No. 12.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 1.)

(No. 117.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 1*, 1895, 7·35 P.M.

MR. BLOCK received yesterday a letter from Tahsin Bey, the Sultan's Chief Secretary, asking him to come and see him at the Palace. On his repairing thither Tahsin Bey read him the following communication from the Sultan :—

"The British Ambassador, at his audience on the 21st March, handed to His Imperial Majesty an extract of a despatch from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. After careful perusal His Majesty had come to the conclusion that certain of the statements contained in this extract were exaggerated and deeply to be regretted. By order of the Sultan a list of Armenian prisoners had been drawn up at the Porte, but, unfortunately, the names of persons who had already been pardoned by His Majesty figured on this list, as well as the names of some ordinary criminals. A Commission had therefore been appointed by the Sultan to draw up a complete and impartial list of all Armenians who are at present in prison for political offences. This Commission consists of the Ministers of Justice, Police, and the Interior, under the presidency of the former.

"The Sultan is every day sending verbal and written messages pressing for the list, which he expects will be ready very shortly.

"At his last audience the Sultan had mentioned to the Ambassador his intention of appointing a Commission of Inquiry into the Armenian question after Baïram. The President has now been appointed" (Tahsin Bey did not give Mr. Block his name), "and the Sultan was at present occupied in choosing the other members of the Commission. They would inquire into the alleged grievances of the Armenians, and would suggest remediary measures, as far as possible without any alteration of existing laws and regulations.

"Should it, however, be found that the existing laws do not suffice, they will suggest such modifications as may be necessary.

"His Majesty proposes to grant the Ambassador another audience after the Selamlik on Friday, when they will be able to resume their conversation on the Armenian question.

"His Majesty, in the full conviction that his Excellency is well disposed both towards himself personally and towards his country, trusts that his Excellency will redouble his efforts to assist him. He is convinced that the Ambassador will approve of the measures he is taking, and that they will produce an excellent effect in England both on the Government and on the general public."

Tahsin Bey then said, as if on his own account, that the attitude I had adopted had been a source of considerable annoyance and distress to the Sultan. The interests of Turkey and England were identical, and it was most important that they should remain firm allies. He knew that I entertained friendly sentiments towards the Sultan, and he hoped that at my next audience I would give His Majesty some proof of this feeling.

The Sultan is evidently aiming at putting a stop to our project of reforms, and I would suggest that your Lordship should instruct me to give some such message as follows to His Majesty :—

"Her Majesty's Government have instructed me to inform your Majesty that they have learnt with pleasure that your Majesty is giving serious attention to the question of Armenian reforms, and that they themselves, in concert with the French and Russian Governments, are engaged in considering a scheme of reforms, which they will communicate to the Sublime Porte."

No. 13.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 2.)

(No. 118.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 2, 1895, 2·45 P.M.*

MR. GRAVES telegraphed to me on the 31st ultimo that, owing to the extraordinary precautions adopted by the civil, military, and religious authorities consequent on the representations made to the Governor-General, the Bairam festival had passed off in perfect tranquillity.

No. 14.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 2.)

(No. 119.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 2, 1895, 2·45 P.M.*

CONSUL-GENERAL HOLMWOOD telegraphed yesterday that some Armenian prisoners, consisting of an Archbishop, three priests, and one professor, arrived at Smyrna from Marash on Saturday, and were sent on by the Austrian Lloyd steamer which left Smyrna on the 31st March for Constantinople.

No. 15.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 2.)

(No. 120.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 2, 1895, 2·45 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 119 of to-day's date, I am informed that the Bishops of Arabkir and Adana, who had been exiled, are now here.

No. 16.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 31.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April 2, 1895.*

I APPROVE the communication which your Excellency proposes to make to the Sultan, as suggested in your telegram No. 117 of the 1st instant.

As regards any details of your language, you will no doubt confer with your French and Russian colleagues.

I see no objection to your adding some courteous expressions of the satisfaction with which Her Majesty's Government have heard of the Sultan's decision to institute an inquiry into cases of imprisonment, if your Excellency considers it desirable to do so.

No. 17.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 3.)

(No. 122.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 3, 1895, 3·30 P.M.*

THE Secretary of the Armenian Patriarch has just called on me to ask for my advice in regard to the following circumstances. Two of the imprisoned Bishops have been delivered to the Patriarch, but their liberty has been made conditional:—

1. On the Patriarch engaging not to employ them again in important posts.
2. On their taking an oath of allegiance to the Sultan.
3. On their taking an oath not to engage again in treasonable practices.

The Secretary, by the Patriarch's desire, asked me what answer I considered should be returned, as the Minister of Police was to call at the Patriarchate in the afternoon for the answer.

As to the 1st condition, he said these appointments were in the hands of the Synod, not of the Patriarch.

I suggested the following reply:—

As to the 1st condition, that the Patriarch should state that he could not possibly give any promise which might fetter the liberty of action of the ecclesiastical authorities of the Armenian Church.

2. That the Bishops were ready to take the oath of allegiance.

3. That the oath demanded by this condition would involve an admission that they had been engaged in acts treasonable to their Sovereign, and inconsistent with their position, and that they could not subscribe to any such oath.

No. 18.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 32.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April 3, 1895.*

I SHOULD be glad if it were possible for you at your audience with the Sultan to draw His Majesty's attention to the methods by which the Turkish authorities seek to obtain from the Armenians Memorials and telegrams expressing satisfaction with the present administration.

There is a flagrant example of this in the Petition from Amassia, forwarded in your despatch No. 164 of the 15th ultimo, and Her Majesty's Consular Representatives at Erzeroum and elsewhere have reported other instances. It would probably, however, be dangerous to specify particular cases, as it might entail further persecution of those who have already suffered.

No. 19.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 140.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April 4, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 180 of the 21st ultimo, relative to the riot which occurred at the opening of the Protestant school at Ordou, and reporting your Excellency's action in the matter.

I have to express my satisfaction at the successful result of your representations.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 20.

Consul-General Blunt to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 5.)

(No. 21.)
My Lord, *Salonica, March 30, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Vice-Consul Blakeney, at Prevesa, reporting the imprisonment at Janina of an Armenian lawyer named Aghop Remzi Ghazarian, who was recently conveyed there under escort from Aleppo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. E. BLUNT.

Inclosure in No. 20.

Vice-Consul Blakeney to Consul-General Blunt.

Prevesa, March 19, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acquaint you that M. Kypriotis reports to me officially that an Armenian lawyer named Aghop Remzi Ghazarian, of Ayin Tap, in the Mutessarifilik of Aleppo, was conveyed to Janina under escort a few days ago and lodged in prison, where he is kept under strict surveillance, and, as it would seem, very badly treated. He was brought to Janina viâ Smyrna, Salonica, and Monastir.

As the above may have some connection with the recent troubles in Armenia, I considered it my duty to communicate the case to you at once.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. A. BLAKENEY.

No. 21.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 6.)

(No. 125.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 6, 1895.

ON receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 121 of the 23rd ultimo I telegraphed to Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van respecting the reported conduct of the Vali of Van in intimidating witnesses who wished to give evidence before the Commission; and I have now received a telegram in reply from Mr. Hallward, in which he states that he knows of no one at Van who would be likely to wish to give evidence, and that he does not believe that there is any truth in the report.

No. 22.

Colonel Chermside to Sir P. Currie.—(*Received at the Foreign Office, April* 8.)

(No. 10.)
(Extract.) *Constantinople, March* 25, 1895.

FERIK ABDULLAH PASHA, A.D.C., President of the Mush-Sassoon Inquiry Commission, has been recalled and appointed Second Military Secretary to the Sultan.

Liva Vehbi Pasha, A.D.C., proceeded to Erzinjian in autumn 1894 to invest Mushir Zekki Pasha with the Grand Cordon of the Imtiaz, and to present standards to certain Hamidieh regiments. He only returned to the capital in March.

It is surmised that he was engaged in trying to get hold of the instructions *re* Mush-Sassoon in the possession of Zekki Pasha and subordinates.

The public offices, civil and military, at the capital have been inspected, and all documents relating to these matters removed.

I heard that in the General Staff Bureaux a telegram of Zekki Pasha's was removed which admitted that 1,722 Armenians—men, women, and children—had been killed.

Liva Edhem Pasha, Fourth Cavalry Division, ex-Acting O.C. Hamidieh cavalry, is at the capital. He is closely watched. It is asserted that he declined to act personally against the Armenians.

No. 23.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 8.)

(No. 201.) *Constantinople, April* 3, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the dispatch of a Dragoman to the Delegates at Moush.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 23.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, March 20, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency of the 7th March, I have the honour to report further as follows on the subject of the dispatch of M. Dikran Srabian, Second Dragoman of the French Consulate, to assist the Delegates with the Commission of Inquiry at Moush.

On the 10th instant I had the honour to receive your Excellency's telegram informing me that the Porte had been requested to instruct the Vali to grant travelling facilities to the Dragoman, and, in a further telegram *en clair* of the 11th instant, I was instructed to ask the Vali formally in writing for the necessary facilities and escort, and to report his official answer.

My colleagues and I accordingly addressed notes to the Vali in this sense on the 12th instant, and were informed by him that he had referred our request by telegram to the Sublime Porte, as I had the honour to report to your Excellency in my telegram *en clair* of the same day.

No answer having been vouchsafed to this request, on the 16th instant your Excellency instructed me by telegram to inform the Vali that, as facilities had not been given for the Dragoman, I was instructed to make preparations to proceed to Moush at once with my Dragoman, and to ask for an escort. I therefore addressed a note to the Vali the same day in the sense indicated, which was at once referred to the Porte, and the following day I twice sent my Dragoman to ask for an answer, and to inform the Vali that I was desirous of starting as soon as possible, his answer being that he could not give the required facilities without orders from Constantinople, but on his asking the Vali on my instructions to let me have this in writing, his Excellency politely declined to do so.

On the evening of the 17th instant, on receipt of identic telegrams *en clair* from our respective Embassies, my colleagues and I drew up identic notes to the Vali, which were conveyed at midnight to the Government House by our Dragomans, repeating our request for escort and facilities for the Dragoman who had been ordered to Moush, and informing his Excellency that if they were not given we intended, under orders from our Ambassadors, to send him off on the morning of the 19th instant, accompanied by three of our cavasses and our special courier. My Dragoman also informed the Vali, verbally, that as the Dragoman was certainly going, there was no longer any necessity for my proposed journey to Moush.

The following morning, the 18th instant, the Dragoman of the vilayet called on all of us, on behalf of the Governor-General, to inform us that, by the Grand Vizier's orders, he was authorized to furnish whatever escort was required, and desired to know our wishes on the subject. We sent our Dragomans to express our thanks, and to inform his Excellency that M. Dikran Srabian would start the next morning early, and request that he might be furnished with a "bouyouroulldou"* and two mounted gendarmes. They only saw the Secretary-General, who gave the required assurances as to the

* Formal permit.

gendarmes, but said that the "bouyouroldou" was not necessary. However, on their return, my French colleague sent back his Dragoman to insist upon its being granted, which was done without further demur. I telegraphed this result to your Excellency without delay, and M. Srabian duly started for Moush on the following morning.

I am bound to add that, in all this affair, the Vali has palpably acted under direct orders from Constantinople, and that neither my colleagues nor myself have had reason to complain of any want of courtesy on his part.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 24.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 8.)

(No. 203.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 3*, 1895.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 342 of the 15th July last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora in regard to the trial of four Armenians from Maden, which is now concluded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 24.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Angora, March* 28, 1895.

IN the inclosure of my despatch of the 10th July, 1894, paragraph 3, I had the honour to mention the case of the four Armenian prisoners of the Maden district, viz., Simonoglou Artin, Kara Oustaoglou Kara Dede, Hatcher Oglouavenk, and Koupeoglou Ohannes.

As therein stated, these men were brought to Angora in May 1894 to undergo a new trial. They had been convicted and condemned in 1893 by the Court of (Ak Dagh) Maden for having taken part in the waylaying and murder of the Maden mail carrier and the zaptieh escorting him.

Subsequent to their conviction two other men, viz., Gulbenk and Toros, were found guilty of this crime by the Angora Court in 1893, and hanged. It naturally led to a supposition by the Court of Cassation that the Maden prisoners had been wrongly condemned, and a new trial was ordered. For this purpose they were sent to Angora, but, as reported in my above-named despatch, they were conveyed back to Yozgat last July.

Their trial has now been concluded, and, with the exception of Hatcher Oglouavenk, who has been acquitted, they have been sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment.

For the same reasons as those given in my despatch No. 21,* I am at present unable to report more than the bare results of the trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

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* Not communicated to Foreign Office.

No. 23*.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 8.)

(No. 202.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 3, 1895.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 186 of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora, giving details of the looting of an Armenian village by a Turkish mob.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 23*.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Angora, March* 28, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to send herewith details about the recent doings at the village of Topaz (Sivas Sandjak), which may complete information already supplied to your Excellency. They have just reached me from a correspondent who derived his information from persons coming from the vicinity of the village in question.

Towards the middle of February, in accordance with the practice obtaining among Armenians, one of them informed the Kaïmakam of Shar-Kishla, in whose district Topaz is situated, that both arms and seditious matter were to be found in that village, specifying the house of a certain Donik Effendi Zadikian as one of the places.

The Kaïmakam forthwith started for Topaz with a body of zaptiehs. On their march they collected a lot of Turks, more or less armed, from the villages they passed through, so that by the time they reached Topaz they numbered some 200 to 300 men. On hearing of their approach some of the Armenian inhabitants fled, but thirty to forty were taken prisoners and conveyed to Shar-Kishla after the village had been looted by the Turkish mob and two Armenian women violated. My informant does not state whether the zaptiehs took any part in the disorders.

Donik Effendi was among the number taken to Shar-Kishla, and, in order to force a confession from him, he was hung up for three days so that his toes only reached the ground.

From another source I hear that nothing was discovered to confirm the revolutionary charges that had been made, and that measures had been taken to prevent communications with the village and immediate vicinity.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

No. 25.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 8.)

(No. 204.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 2, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of the Memorandum on Armenian grievances communicated to me by the Patriarch to-day, which was sent to the Sultan through Munir Bey, and also to the Minister of Justice.

Munir Bey returned it after a few days, with the remark that the language contained in it was unsuitable, and after a month's delay it was also sent back by the Minister of Justice, with a note stating that it was disloyal in tone, and that it was not the business of the Patriarch to interfere in political questions.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 25.

The Patriarch of the Armenians to the Turkish Minister of Justice.

(Traduction.)
Excellence, *Le* 8 *Février* (v. s.), 1895.

PAR mon précédent "Takrir," que j'ai eu l'honneur de vous adresser le 9 Janvier, je vous avais fait part de son intention de vous exposer les faits contraires à la justice qui se commettent dans les provinces habitées par les Arméniens, et qui forment l'objet de leurs griefs. Spécialement, j'avais demandé l'autorisation d'envoyer un dignitaire ecclésiastique à Mouche, en vue d'aider à l'enquête sur les événements de Sassoun, et d'administrer ce diocèse.

Encouragé par l'ordre que Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan a daigné m'adresser de lui soumettre un exposé de la question Arménienne, je m'empresse, après avoir mûrement étudié celle-ci sous ses divers aspects, de présenter un aperçu général et très scrupuleux de l'état réel des choses, sur la base des rapports officiels et privés qui, depuis de longues années, n'ont cesse de parvenir au Patriarcat, et dont le Patriarche, de son côté, a fait l'objet de nombreux "Takrirs" au Gouvernement Impérial.

Dissimuler la situation douloureuse de la communauté, en vue d'être agréable au Gouvernement, est une faute suprême, qui peut avoir des effets nuisibles. La seule manière de servir avec fidélité et d'une façon salutaire Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et le puissant Empire Ottoman c'est de ne pas sacrifier le bien du pays et de la communauté à de coupables considérations et à des intérêts personnels. Ne pouvant suivre une autre voie et me sentant sous le poids d'une immense responsabilité, j'ose vous exprimer, par ce "Takrir," la vérité, convaincu que par là j'aurai rempli en même temps mes devoirs envers le Gouvernement et ceux envers ma nation, selon mon engagement solennel lors de mon élévation à la dignité Patriarcale.

L'histoire de plusieurs siècles témoigne que la nation Arménienne a, depuis la conquête Ottomane, fidèlement exécuté toutes ses obligations de sujétion. Loin d'avoir, quant à elle, provoqué des crises politiques, elle a, dans des moments difficiles, donné des preuves de son dévouement à l'État, et rendu au Gouvernement les services exiges d'elle, et qu'il est superflu de rappeler.

La nation Arménienne, adonnée à l'agriculture, à l'industrie, et au commerce, a toujours été un facteur important dans les progrès du pays. Elle a toujours payé tous les impôts mis à sa charge, vécus en bons rapports avec les autres communautés sujettes de l'Empire, et particulièrement avec ses compatriotes Turcs, ne demandant, en définitive, qu'à jouir des bienfaits de la civilisation. Dans sa vie privée elle est restée attachée à sa religion Chrétienne, eu soin d'entretenir, par des contributions volontaires, ses églises, ses couvents, et ses écoles, s'est souciée d'instruire ses enfants, et est parvenue à donner à la société des hommes aptes à toutes les professions, et à l'État des fonctionnaires capables.

Et cependant, Excellence, cette nation se trouve aujourd'hui dans un état tel qu'il n'est point possible d'y vivre d'une vie paisible et tranquille, ni en tant qu'individus, ni en tant que nation.

L'organisation actuelle de l'Administration de la Justice et de la Police Provinciales, avec son esprit de centralisation excessive, et ses attributions restreintes, d'une part, et la façon dont elle fonctionne entre les mains d'un personnel ou fanatique ou incapable, d'autre part, est insuffisante pour sauvegarder les droits des populations, placées sous la protection de l'Etat. La conséquence d'une pareille situation, et de cette méfiance à l'égard des Arméniens, qui est à l'ordre du jour, et qui a donné lieu à une catégorie de rigueurs Gouvernementales, est que la vie, l'honneur, et les biens continuent à n'être point assurés dans les provinces habitées par les Arméniens.

Dans ces provinces, des hordes de Kurdes et de Tcherkess, partout où elles existent, sillonnent les campagnes en tous sens, librement et impunément, commettent des meurtres, font main basse sur les objets et le bétail des populations rurales, mettent le feu aux granges et aux monceaux de fourrages, et en hiver, les paysans dépourvus de nourriture pour eux-mêmes et pour leur bétail, se voient forcés de leur abandonner ce dernier.

L'occupation principale des Arméniens est l'agriculture, et cependant les terrains qu'ils occupent depuis des temps immémoriaux, comme les habitants les plus anciens du pays, qu'ils ont fécondés de leurs sueurs, et dont les produits contribuent à remplir le Trésor Impérial, sont arrachés de leurs mains par des procédés divers. Tantôt des personnages influents, Turcs et Kurdes, grâce aux facilités que leur procurent les régions officielles, réussissent à faire inscrire clandestinement en leurs noms des terrains qui ne leur appartiennent pas et dont ils délogent les véritables propriétaires. Ou bien, afin de jouir de la protection d'un Chef de tribu quelconque et de se garantir contre les méfaits et déprédations des membres de sa tribu, les paysans sont obligés de lui céder les meilleurs lots de leurs terrains. Il est arrivé même que les Arméniens, laissés à la merci de l'hostilité continuelle et des empiètements des Chefs et membres des tribus Kurdes, se sont trouvés contraints de leur céder des villages entiers. Quelquefois, c'est une sentence inique obtenue par pression, qui consomme la spoliation. Aussi le paysan, dépouillé de ses biens, sans protection contre les violences auxquelles il est en butte, taxé en criminel au nom de la loi, par toute velléité de légitime défense et comme tel exposé aux rigueurs de l'autorité, finit-il par devenir le serf des Beys et des Aghas, lesquels vont jusqu'à faire de lui un objet de raille dans leurs rapports; il paie à ces seigneurs des impôts déterminés, met à leur service sa personne, sa famille et ses troupeaux, s'oblige à cultiver les champs pour leur compte et profit, avec ses propres bestiaux, à construire leurs édifices fournissant gratuitement à la fois le travail et les matériaux, à remplir en un mot toutes les corvées exigées de lui.

Les propriétés des couvents Arméniens, dont les moines n'ont que les produits de ces terres pour vivre et pour subvenir aux besoins spirituels de leurs ouailles, ne sont pas davantage respectées. Il y a même des couvents qui, avec l'ensemble de leurs dépendances rurales, ont été occupés par les Kurdes et où le service religieux a cessé. Ainsi des sanctuaires antiques qui datent des premiers siècles du Christianisme servent d'abris aux Kurdes et d'étables à leurs animaux.

Les paysans, outre les impôts qu'ils acquittent au Trésor Impérial, sont tenus d'en payer un autre, connu sous le nom d'impôt de "kafirié" (impôt de mécréants) aux Chefs Kurdes. Des couvents mêmes sont devenus tributaires de certains Aghas, qui perçoivent périodiquement des taxes déterminées.

Il est facile de comprendre combien ces maux s'aggravent lorsque ces mêmes Kurdes, qui ne vivent que de rapines et d'assassinats, sont officiellement appelés à former des troupes de cavalerie armée. Leurs violences n'ont plus de bornes, à tel point que dans certaines localités la population n'ose pas se montrer dehors. Quand il se produit des plaintes contre la conduite de ces troupes, l'autorité civile et militaire se déclarent chacune incompétente pour les entendre et le cavalier Kurde, assuré de l'impunité, se voit tout puissant.

D'autre part, les agents du fisc et les Multézims viennent mettre le comble à ces maux. Pour percevoir les impôts, l'Administration envoie huit à dix gendarmes à cheval dans des villages qui n'ont qu'une trentaine de maisons, et les paysans sont astreints à fournir le logement et la nourriture à tous ses gens et à leurs montures. Les percepteurs donnent la bastonnade aux villageois et aux curés et vont jusqu'à blasphémer la religion Chrétienne et les choses sacrées, saisissent les instruments aratoires et jusqu'aux haillons de ceux qui ne peuvent immédiatement s'acquitter et font jeter en prison ceux qui n'ont absolument rien. Quant aux Multézims, ils comptent double le bétail et la récolte du paysan, qu'ils obligent ainsi de payer la taxe sur des produits qui n'existent point. Ils ne procèdent pas au mésurage de la récolte en temps opportun, d'où il résulte que le paysan se trouve dans l'alternative ou de voir pourrir sa récolte ou la laissant sur place, ou, s'il l'engrange, de subir plus tard les exigences des Multézims.

Dans l'adjudication des dîmes, montrer un revenu supérieur à celui de l'année précédente est considéré comme un titre de récompense pour les fonctionnaires; aussi en plusieurs localités ceux-ci au lieu de porter leurs soins au choix de l'adjudicataire qui doit offrir toutes les garanties désirables d'honnêteté personnelle et de capacité financière, acceptent tout offre pouvant réaliser un surplus. Dans ces conditions des personnes sans aveux, à qui les moyens les plus vexatoires sont bons pour faire fortune, deviennent adjudicataires, pressurent la population. Et comme ils restent souvent débiteurs du Trésor Impérial, l'autorité locale use de tolérance envers eux, pour leur donner le moyen de s'acquitter de leurs dettes.

Las de cet état de choses, les paysans préfèrent émigrer. Mais cette émigration même rencontre des obstacles. Ainsi, pendant le trajet, les Kurdes se jettent sur eux et enlèvent leurs dernières ressources. Il arrive aussi que les personnes mâles, laissant leurs familles dans leurs foyers, s'en vont par groupes à l'étranger, pour acquérir quelques moyens d'existence. Ces émigrés, quand ils veulent rentrer dans leurs pays, en sont empêchés par les autorités locales, qui leur font un crime d'avoir abandonné le pays pour trouver un gagne-pain.

En ce qui concerne l'honneur des familles, que de fois des femmes nouvellement mariées ont été enlevées le jour même de leur mariage! Il est avéré que des jeunes femmes et des vierges non pubères ont subies les derniers outrages. Dans les prisons des criminels ont pu assouvir leurs passions immondes sur de jeunes Arméniens. Et il est même arrivé que des personnes appartenant à la même famille ont été obligées, sous menace de mort, à se livrer à des accouplements incestueux. Il nous répugne de nous appesantir sur ce triste chapitre.

Nous avons la douleur d'ajouter qu'à la suite de l'esprit de défiance, dont le Gouvernement est animé à l'égard des Arméniens depuis quelques temps, les iniquités commises sous différentes formes par une foule de fonctionnaires, appartenant à l'Administration, à la Justice, et à l'armée, sont venues mettre le comble aux maux, qui accablent la nation. Formuler une plainte, présenter une observation en vue de sauvegarder des droits individuels violés, faire une quête au profit des écoles et des églises, se faire inscrire parmi les membres d'une Association philanthropique, lire une oeuvre poétique anciennement publiée, ou un journal dont la prohibition n'est pas même annoncée par le Gouvernement, avoir chez soi une arme quelconque ou une quantité minime de poudre, constituent aux yeux du Gouvernement de graves délits, que l'Arménien doit expier par des années de prison.

Ces fonctionnaires et une foule d'aventuriers n'ayant aucune attribution officielle se livrent à des accusations fausses contre les Arméniens tantôt pour obtenir une rémunération ou un avancement, tantôt pour assouvir des haines personnelles. Le fait le plus inoffensif, le moindre incident de droit commun, la délation d'un dénonciateur anonyme, ou des déclarations obtenues par divers moyens tels que pression, emploi de force, &c., suffisent pour que toute une population soit considérée comme responsable. Dans ces cas des arrestations en masse ont souvent lieu et après de longues années de détention préventive, les personnes arrêtées sont condamnées aux plus grandes peines, par des formalités, qui simulent une procédure régulière. D'autres fois, ces formalités mêmes sont jugées superflues, et des attaques armées sur la pauvre population ont lieu. Ces attaques aboutissent à la perpétration sur la population entière des plus grands crimes, comme en témoignent les événements d'Erzeroum, de Césarée, de Yozgath et tout dernièrement celui de Sassoun, qui a eu lieu dans les circonstances les plus tragiques.

Plusieurs Métropolitains, Évêques, Prélats, et prêtres, parmi lesquels un vénérable vieillard de quatre-vingts ans, ont été internés dans les prisons publiques à côté des malfaiteurs et des assassins. Après des années de détention préventive, ces ecclésiastiques ont été condamnés à diverses peines, telles que la détention dans une enceinte fortifiée, l'exil, et même la peine de mort.

Faute de renseignements officiels, le Patriarcat ignore le nombre exact des membres du clergé se trouvant actuellement dans les cachots. Néanmoins les rapports qui y sont parvenus, quoique très incomplets, prouvent qu'actuellement une quarantaine d'ecclésiastiques, parmi lesquels cinq Évêques, onze Prélats, et vingt-deux prêtres, sont emprisonnés. En outre, plusieurs membres du clergé ont trouvé la mort dans les prisons.

Des brigades de gendarmerie montée visitent continuellement les villages dans le but de faire des recherches. Ils sont accompagnés de Kurdes et Tcherkess, qui les aident par leur connaissance des conditions locales. Ce n'est qu'en créant de toute pièce les traces d'un complot politique ou d'un mouvement révolutionnaire que ces brigades peuvent justifier aux yeux de l'autorité supérieure leur raison d'être. Et comme il faut baser des révélations de ce genre sur des aveux pour leur donner l'apparence de vérité, on bat cruellement les paysans, pour les obliger à faire des déclarations dans ce sens. On opère

des descentes inopinées dans les maisons et, lors des perquisitions, des spoliations, ainsi que des outrages à l'honneur des femmes affolées, ont lieu.

Les brigades de recherches ont ainsi conduit à la prison, sous les prétextes les plus futiles, un grand nombre d'Arméniens, parmi lesquels plusieurs écoliers et adolescents.

Dans les cachots on donne la bastonnade aux prisonniers après avoir mis leurs corps complètement à nu. On les lie à des poteaux ayant la forme de croix et on leur brûle la peau avec des fers rouges. On les invite à embrasser la religion Musulmane avec la promesse de faire cesser leurs tortures et de les mettre en liberté. On menace les jeunes gens de leur faire subir les derniers outrages, s'ils ne confessent pas des choses qu'ils ignorent absolument. Ailleurs, on marchande aux paysans leur liberté en leur demandant des rançons. Les personnes arrêtées se trouvant souvent dans l'impossibilité de payer la somme demandée, on les fait accompagner de gendarmes, pour se rendre aux marchés et se procurer de l'argent nécessaire en s'adressant de boutique en boutique. On ose même demander à des femmes, dont les maris se trouvent en prison, des rançons ou leur consentement à subir les derniers outrages, contre la mise en liberté de ceux-ci.

Le nombre des prisonniers laïques se chiffre par des milliers. Mais la correspondance du Patriarcat avec les Métropolitains et autres autorités ecclésiastiques des provinces étant en grande partie interrompue, par suite des circonstances connues, il a été impossible d'en connaître le nombre exact.

Il nous est bien pénible de constater que les "takrirs" par lesquels le Patriarche porte ces faits à la connaissance du Gouvernement Impérial et sollicite des remèdes aux maux et privations dont souffre la nation, ne sont pas même acceptés. Ces démarches du Patriarche, qui sont basées sur les intérêts communs du Gouvernement, du pays, et de la nation, sont considérées comme une intervention et un empiètement dans des affaires purement administratives, se trouvant en dehors des privilèges et de la compétence du Patriarcat.

En examinant la situation au point de vue de la liberté des cultes, nous remarquons avec regret que, par suite de l'oppression subie, la nation Arménienne se trouve même privée des consolations spirituelles et du droit d'exercer librement les préceptes et les devoirs de sa religion Chrétienne. Les difficultés soulevées dernièrement rendent impossible au Patriarcat non seulement l'obtention de l'autorisation pour construire de nouvelles églises aux endroits où le besoin en est constaté et pour restaurer celles anciennement existantes dont l'état de délabrement nécessite des réparations, mais encore plusieurs églises, datant depuis un demi-siècle, ont été fermées, pour l'unique cause que l'acte d'autorisation anciennement obtenu n'a pu être présenté, les habitants de l'endroit ignorant auprès de qui cet acte avait été laissé en garde. Ainsi il y a des villages où la population est privée de la Sainte Communion et des autres sacrements de l'Église. Les nouveaux-nés restent sans baptême et les morts sont enterrés sans aucune cérémonie religieuse.

Les livres sacrés de notre sainte religion, dont la moindre lettre ne peut être altérée, sont soumis à l'examen et aux corrections des censeurs. Dans les calendriers marquant les fêtes religieuses, certaines parties relatives aux noms des Saints et à leurs fêtes ont été supprimées, et on en a défendu l'impression sans ces changements. La lecture des anciennes impressions de ces ouvrages sacrés est considérée comme un délit.

L'impression de l'Histoire d'Arménie n'est autorisée qu'avec des changements et des suppressions. Dans les ouvrages scolaires les censeurs du Ministère de l'Instruction Publique suppriment les noms des anciens Rois, Princes, et Généraux Arméniens, et les remplacent par d'autres noms. On défend de même l'emploi des noms Arméniens de plusieurs villes.

Comme toutes les autres Églises Chrétiennes, l'Église Arménienne aussi a son appellation propre—elle s'appelle l'Église d'Arménie ("Haïasdanyatz Yégué ghétzi"). C'est avec peine que nous voyons qu'on veut nier même à notre sainte Église le droit de porter son nom propre, en supprimant le mot "Haïasdanyatz."

Depuis la conversion de la nation Arménienne à la religion Chrétienne, le Chef Suprême de l'Église Nationale est le Catholicos d'Etchmiadzine, à la haute juridiction duquel toute la nation est soumise spirituellement. Pourtant le Gouvernement Impérial défend l'insertion du nom de Sa Sainteté dans les journaux Arméniens et la publication de ses Bulles.

Quand un Chrétien, homme ou femme, accepte la religion Musulmane, emmène avec lui ses enfants mineurs, l'usage établi par le Gouvernement les lui laisse jusqu'à leur majorité, avec la liberté pour les enfants d'opter à cet âge pour la religion qu'ils préféreraient.

Néanmoins, ces enfants, cohabitant avec des Musulmans, n'apprennent pas leur langue maternelle et les préceptes de la religion Chrétienne. On leur donne, au contraire, une

éducation religieuse Musulmane. Aussi à leur majorité restent-ils Musulmans par suite de leur ignorance de la langue maternelle et de la religion nationale. Il résulte de cet état de choses qu'un renégat Chrétien amène, en même temps que sa personne, ses enfants mineurs dans l'Islamisme. Plusieurs enfants se trouvant dans les conditions précitées ont été circoncis, comme des enfants nés Musulmans, et les morts d'entre eux enterrés dans les cimetières Musulmans par le ministère des Imams. En outre, les lois établies par le Gouvernement permettant aux adolescents mâles et femelles de 13 à 15 ans de se convertir à la religion Musulmane, à Constantinople et dans les provinces, des mineurs de cet âge arrachés à leurs familles sont séparés de leur église et introduits dans le monde Islamique.

Que d'églises et de couvents ont été confisqués et profanés. Combien en ont été saccagés et incendiés. N'a-t-on pas vu des portes de sanctuaires et des monuments portant le signe de la Sainte-Croix souillés par des immondices. Et pendant les recherches exercées par suite de la méfiance régnante, le Saint-Calice n'a-t-il pas été saisie, et l'Eucharistie, si sacrée pour tout Chrétien, jetée par terre? Ces faits ont cruellement blessé les cœurs des Arméniens, qui aiment avec ferveur leur religion Chrétienne. Et c'est avec des larmes aux yeux que nous en faisons ici mention.

Tandis que d'un côté le Patriarcat se trouve impuissant de donner satisfaction aux instances et plaintes de la population, et de porter remède à l'état actuel des choses, d'un autre côté des difficultés et des obstacles de nature à empêcher le maintien intact des privilèges de la dignité Patriarcale et des Métropolitains ont surgi. Ces obstacles et empêchements causent la dislocation de l'organisation ecclésiastique et religieuse des Arméniens.

Nous énumérons les principaux faits dans cet ordre d'idées:—

1. Les Arméniens possèdent des Statuts organiques ratifiés par Iradé Impérial, qui définissent les Lois régissant leurs administration spirituelle et ecclésiastique, le mode d'élection des chefs spirituels de la nation et des membres des différents Conseils et Comités, ainsi que les attributions et le mode de fonctionnement de ceux-ci.

Pourtant l'application des principes fondamentaux de ces Statuts, leur mention en langue Arménienne dans les journaux, et la célébration de la fête anniversaire de leur proclamation ont été défendues par le Gouvernement, sous différents prétextes.

Les membres des divers Conseils et Comités de l'Administration Nationale sont empêchés de se réunir en séances réglementaires et on en a emprisonné plusieurs pour s'être acquittés des devoirs de leurs fonctions. De même, plusieurs Arméniens, qui exerçaient leur droit de vote dans l'élection des différents Conseils, ont été conduits en prison, sous prétexte qu'ils avaient élu les membres de prétendus Comités révolutionnaires.

Ces circonstances prouvent que les Statuts Organiques ont cessé d'être en vigueur, ce qui a pour conséquence la dissolution de l'organisation spirituelle de la nation.

2. Le Bérat d'investiture de la dignité Patriarcale ainsi que les privilèges ecclésiastiques stipulent en ce qui concerne les Métropolitains et les Évêques accusés de la part des fonctionnaires du Gouvernement d'un délit ou d'un crime pouvant nécessiter leur destitution ou leur envoi en exil, que le Gouvernement ne prendra aucune mesure, sans en vérifier l'exactitude en déférant l'affaire au Patriarcat. Il résulte des mêmes privilèges qu'aucune punition ne peut être infligée aux ecclésiastiques avant que le Patriarche leur ait enlevé le sacerdoce. Pourtant, comme il a été dit plus haut, plusieurs ecclésiastiques se trouvent actuellement dans les prisons et en exil, et des punitions leur ont été infligées dans des conditions tout à fait contraires aux privilèges du Patriarcat, ainsi qu'aux arrangements Gouvernementaux. Par contre, la mise en pratique du droit du Patriarche d'inviter au respect de l'ordre les ecclésiastiques récalcitrants et de les punir en cas de besoin, se heurte à des difficultés et même à des obstacles par l'immixtion du Gouvernement.

3. Les écrits du Patriarcat, ainsi que les ouvrages qu'il veut faire imprimer ne sont naturellement pas soumis à la censure. Or, le Ministère de l'Instruction Publique assimilant ces écrits et ouvrages à ceux d'ordre privé, présentés par des particuliers, en défend l'impression sans l'autorisation de la censure. Il en est de même des communications et annonces que le Patriarcat adresse aux journaux.

4. Les écoles paroissiales de la nation Arménienne sont instituées, pour inculquer à la jeunesse, en même temps qu'une instruction générale utilisante, la parfaite connaissance de la langue, de la religion et de l'histoire nationales et pour leur donner une éducation conforme aux saines principes de la religion et de la morale. L'entretien en est exclusivement supporté par la nation. Le Ministère de l'Instruction Publique a mis, cependant, ces écoles au rang de simples établissements privés, en les enlevant à la surveillance, au contrôle, et à la juridiction du Patriarcat et à celle des Évêchés.

5. Tandis que la solution des différends provenant des affaires de testament et de dot se trouve, par sa nature même, du ressort de l'autorité ecclésiastique, le Gouvernement ne reconnaît pas la compétence du Patriarcat et des Métropolitains Arméniens dans ces affaires. Lors des négociations relatives à l'arrangement concernant les privilèges des Patriarcats Arménien et Grec, le Gouvernement avait promis par des déclarations verbales, d'octroyer au Patriarcat Arménien toutes les stipulations du *modus vivendi* accordé au Patriarcat Grec. Néanmoins, les privilèges reconnus au dit Patriarcat, en ce qui concerne les affaires de testament et de dot, ont été refusés ultérieurement au Patriarcat Arménien.

6. Les formalités que le Gouvernement a dernièrement établies pour obtenir l'autorisation de construire des écoles, églises, &c., ou pour restaurer celles anciennement existantes loin de procurer des facilités au Patriarcat, causent de nouvelles difficultés et de graves retards.

D'un autre côté le Gouvernement ayant décidé de fermer les églises et écoles ne possédant pas des Firmans Impériaux, jusqu'à ce que de nouveaux Firmans soient obtenus, de nouvelles difficultés ont surgi. Ainsi, dans trois villages du district d'Agheu, Vilayet de Mamouret-ul-Aziz, le Mudir a fait fermer les églises, parce que les paysans ignorant où se trouvaient les Firmans obtenus, n'ont pu les présenter. Ce Mudir est allé jusqu'à faire sceller les portes des dites églises, pour que les habitants ne puissent les ouvrir.

C'est en vain que le Patriarcat a fait connaître au Gouvernement les dates des Firmans accordés et a sollicité, à plusieurs reprises, la réouverture des églises. Il a été répondu par écrit que l'obtention de nouveaux Firmans était indispensable, ce qui aura pour conséquence de priver encore longtemps les habitants des dits trois villages de tout service religieux.

Suivant la même décision, les églises, écoles, et couvents, qui étant construits avant la conquête Ottomane, ne possèdent pas des Firmans, ainsi que ceux construits après la conquête, dont les Firmans ont été égarés, seront fermés.

7. Dans la religion Chrétienne le mariage religieux est seul légal et le droit d'héritage appartient exclusivement aux enfants issus de ce mariage. La qualité d'héritier ne peut donc être établie et certifiée que par l'autorité ecclésiastique de laquelle relevait la personne décédée. Pourtant, les Tribunaux du "Chéri" promulguent les "heudjetts" d'héritage en se contentant du témoignage du premier venu, tandis qu'il faudrait les baser sur les renseignements fournis par le Patriarcat. Par conséquent, ces sortes d'affaires sont-elles résolues suivant les préceptes de la religion Musulmane.

8. Outre les autres impôts établis par le Gouvernement, la nation Arménienne contribue aussi à l'impôt spécial établi pour les frais de l'instruction publique. Or, aucune somme provenant des dits impôts n'est affectée aux besoins de ses établissements scolaires, qui sont soutenus exclusivement par les dons volontaires de la nation.

Les décisions prises par la Sublime Porte avaient déjà rendu extrêmement difficile de faire des collectes et des souscriptions au profit des écoles et des églises.

Le Gouvernement Ottoman a dernièrement défendu, d'une manière générale, toute souscription et collecte de cette nature. Aussi les ressources des établissements de piété et scolaires ont-elles tari.

Conformément à un usage antique, consacré d'ailleurs par des Firmans et des Bérats, les Supérieurs des couvents envoyaient des membres de leurs congrégations dans les dépendances de leurs diocèses pour recueillir les dons et offrandes par lesquels sont soutenus les dits établissements religieux. Tandis que depuis quelque temps, les autorités provinciales défendent le maintien de cet usage en s'abritant derrière un ordre de la Sublime Porte. Aussi, il devient impossible de pourvoir aux besoins des couvents.

Il a été de même défendu de faire des quêtes en faveur des pauvres aux fêtes de Noël et de Pâques et d'obtenir les dons en argent nommé "Yaghakine" destinés à l'achat de l'huile nécessaire à l'illumination des églises.

Voilà, Excellence, une esquisse de l'état général de la nation Arménienne. A cet égard d'amples informations se trouvent consignées dans les nombreux "Takrirs" que le Patriarcat n'a cessé de présenter au Gouvernement Impérial depuis de longues années et dont une liste, accompagnant le présent Mémoire, mentionne les principaux.

Le Gouvernement Ottoman a été à même, grâce à différentes enquêtes, de constater et de vérifier la situation des provinces habitées par les Arméniens et ce que réclament les besoins locaux, et il connaît tous les faits.

Le Patriarcat s'est, maintes fois, adressé au Gouvernement Impérial; il en a toujours reçu des promesses de réformes à réaliser et de remèdes à porter à la situation, et, cependant, les démarches faites et les assurances reçues sont restées vaines.

La nation Arménienne, Excellence, désire en tant que communauté Chrétienne l'entière liberté de son culte, le fonctionnement sans entraves de son organisation civile-

religieuse, le maintien intact de ses privilèges ecclésiastiques. Elle demande, en tant qu'Arménienne, à vivre dans le monde, avec les attributs essentiels et les caractères distinctifs de son individualité nationale. Elle aspire à l'établissement d'un ordre de choses de nature à lui garantir la jouissance de tous les droits que la Providence a accordés à l'humanité, et de tous les bienfaits que la civilisation réserve aux peuples laborieux.

Et ma parfaite conviction, Excellence, est que la réalisation de ces desiderata de la nation Arménienne s'accorde avec les intérêts mêmes de l'Empire Ottoman et du pays.

J'ai, &c.

Le Patriarche des Arméniens de Turquie,
(Signé) MADTEOS.

No. 26.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April 8.*)

(No. 209.)

Constantinople, April 4, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 162 of the 13th ultimo, and other correspondence, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora in regard to certain Armenian prisoners at Yozgat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 26.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Angora, March 25, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 14th instant, received on the 22nd, instructing me to furnish any information I may possess regarding the Armenian prisoners mentioned in the list inclosed therewith, I have the honour to forward full details, thus completing the particulars about these men given in my despatches of the 29th June and 1st October, 1894.

As to the proceedings of the court-martial by which these men were tried and condemned, I had the honour to submit my remarks thereon in despatches of the 13th and 30th April, 1894. Everything I have heard since tends to confirm the information therein contained.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 26.

Notes on certain Armenian Prisoners in Angora Vilayet.

1. NAHABETH SEMERDJIAN, lawyer, had his house riddled with bullets during the Yozgat conflicts of Friday, the 2nd February, 1894—one or two members of his household being wounded. He was ill in bed at the time, but subsequently addressed a petition to the Commission of Inquiry then sitting at Yozgat, requesting that an examination of his house should be made, whence it would be clearly seen that the bullets were from the rifles used by the soldiers, whose participation in the events had been denied by the authorities. Shortly afterwards he was arrested and tried by the court-martial as an instigator of the "Church" troubles of the 12th December, 1893. He was confronted with the famous revolutionary agent Moroük, *alias* Zirar Caloust, whom he was charged with having sheltered one night. He showed some spirit before his Judges, and refused to sign the Minute of the proceedings. He was ultimately condemned to a long term of imprisonment by the court-martial, but was included in the Sultan's pardon of the 31st August last. He is now living at Angora.

2. Dr. (Hekimian) Dikran Sunni, came to Yozgat from Sivas some three years ago.

In 1893 six Turkish burglars broke into the house of Bedros Effendi Agopian, Dr. Dieran's father-in-law, whom they strangled to death, besides ill-treating his youngest daughter who tried to help her father.

Owing to the doctor's exertions, five of the culprits were duly arrested, tried, and condemned. Abdullah, the sixth, remained at large, but was on the point of being arrested too, when the "Church" events of the 12th December occurred. Amongst the Turkish victims of that day was the son of a certain Eyoue Hodja. In order to revenge himself and his companions, Abdullah persuaded his brother Tevfik Oglou Ahmed, who is also the uncle of one of the murderers, to denounce the doctor as the assassin of the Turkish youth. Being an influential man in Turkish lower circles, Ahmed had no difficulty in procuring several false witnesses to support his accusation, and the doctor was duly convicted of the crime and sentenced to death by the court-martial.

The witnesses stated that the shot had been fired by the doctor from the house of the chemist Bedros Santirdjian, but, as they likewise admitted that there were four persons firing from the same house, it was maintained that they could not possibly have distinguished who actually killed the youth.

Moreover, Dr. Dieran declared before the Court that he was in his father-in-law's house at the time, and had two witnesses ready to prove it. One was a Turkish servant called Keussé Zadé Ahmed, and the other an Armenian called Dardirian. These men were not allowed to appear.

Memdouh Pasha, Vali of Angora, was at Yozgat at the time of the trial, and, after making inquiries and satisfying himself of the doctor's innocence, intervened on his behalf, but he was afraid to carry his interference too far for fear of being accused of taking bribes from Armenians to defend them. Dr. Dieran is still in prison at Yozgat.

3. Hambartzoum Papazian is one of the richest and most prominent Armenians of Yozgat. He is a member of the Lay Committee, and possesses several Turkish decorations for services rendered to the Government. He was on friendly terms with Abedin Pasha when the latter was Vali here. About a fortnight before the "Church" conflict of the 12th December, 1893, he came to Angora for medical treatment, and after staying here two months he proceeded to Constantinople on business (February 1894). He was arrested at Constantinople in June 1894, at the request of the court-martial, and was conveyed to Yozgat, where he was charged with being implicated with the doings of the revolutionary agent Moreuk, *alias* Zirur Calousf, who was subsequently hanged at Yozgat.

The indictment was based on signed declarations procured by Hanefi Effendi, Kaimakam of Maden, from the Armenians of the villages of Behek, Tchaknak, and Terzili, to the effect that the previous autumn Hambartsoum had visited their district, and had enjoined them to obey and assist the said Moreuk when he should visit them. A certain number of villagers were brought to Yozgat to be confronted with Hambartsoum, but, being previously questioned privately by a member of the court-martial as to their written statements, they declared that there was no truth in their depositions, which they had been compelled to sign under threats of being themselves accused of sheltering Moreuk. As it was feared that they would maintain their disavowals in Court, they were at once sent back to their villages.

The trial of Hampartzoum Papazian merely consisted in his being interrogated—

(1). As to his visit to the villages above mentioned, which he explained by saying that he went there regularly every autumn to collect the tithes which he farmed. That he was accompanied throughout his tour that autumn by two Turkish partners, one of whom was Madenli Tatli Effendi, an employé of the tobacco Régie, and by his Turkish servant Abdullah, now zaptieh at Yozgat. That they never left him, and could be examined as to the truth of the allegations against him; but this was not done.

(2.) As to his departure from Yozgat just before the "Church" conflict with which they tried to connect him. His departure, he maintained, was due to ill-health, and his desire to obtain medical advice.

(3.) As to his having been pointed out by the leading Armenians of Yozgat as the person to whom the Vali of Angora should apply for an explanation of their grievances. In answer to this he said that when the news of the December conflicts reached Angora, the Vali, Memdouh Pasha, placed himself in direct telegraphic communication with the leading Armenians of Yozgat. They, learning that a certain Armenian called Melcon, whom they did not trust, was at the telegraph office with the Vali, were afraid to state their case, and referred the Vali to their townsman, then in Angora.

(4.) As to his not going to see the Vali when repeatedly invited to do so in December 1893. This, he said, was due to the precarious state of health he was then in.

(5.) As to his leaving Angora for Constantinople after the news of the February troubles, to which he replied that he went there on business as was his habit.

No witnesses were brought forward, but he was condemned to death, and is still in prison. He has made repeated attempts to address Petitions to the Government, but has not been allowed the necessary implements, and he has complained of rough usage.

4. Agopdjan Papazian is a cousin of Hampartzoum Papazian and a member of the District Council, as well as of the Armenian Lay Committee of Yozgat. He was accused of having been armed on the 12th December and of having encouraged the Armenians in firing on the Turkish mob. The witnesses against him were Turks of the lowest class. General Osman Pasha, the Redif Commanding Officer who was on the spot, came forward and stated that Agopdjan Papazian was not guilty of those charges; whereupon the accusation was altered, and the same witnesses were made to depose to having seen him encourage the men who were ringing the church bells to assemble the people. He was condemned to death, and is still in the Yozgat prison.

5. Haritoun (Artin) Tekirian, a lawyer, and a member of the Lay Committee of Yozgat, drew up a long Petition, numerously signed and sent to the Sultan, setting forth the grievances of the Armenian community. This subsequently came to the knowledge of the court-martial, and he was looked upon as a revolutionary agitator. No special charge seems to have been brought against him, but his fearless demeanour before the Court appears to have excited the wrath of the President, and he was condemned to death. He is also in the prison of Yozgat.

6. Nazareth Berberian, a merchant of Yozgat and the son a member of the Armenian Lay Committee, was suspected by the authorities of having been mixed up in the posting of seditious placards in 1892.

This fact having been brought to light after the events of the 12th December, he was arrested and accused of having on that day killed the son of Sofou Nodja whilst he was being carried away wounded. He maintained before the court-martial that he did not know the use of fire-arms and could prove an *alibi*. He also remains in the Yozgat prison under sentence of death.

7. Seropé Eminian was Treasurer of the Yozgat district. He had become guarantee for a debtor of Lutfi Bey, an influential local Turk. The debtor failing in his engagement, Lutfi Bey took legal proceedings against Séropé, and on the strength of an order for sequestration forcibly broke into his house and ransacked it. Several articles of jewelry were afterwards missed, and Seropé brought a suit against Lutfi Bey for breaking into his dwelling and for theft.

At this juncture the troubles of the 12th December occurred, and Lutfi Bey took his revenge by getting Seropé implicated. Several low Turks were found to depose that they had seen him kill a zaptieh, called Nedjib, on the 12th December. Notwithstanding that their evidence was conflicting, he was sentenced to death by the court-martial, and is still in the Yozgat prison.

8. Markos Garabethian (Tabaghian), a tanner by trade, was the first victim of the "Church" conflict of the 12th December, 1893, when he was badly wounded in the leg. On the arrival of the Commission of Inquiry he presented a Petition for redress and named his assailants. Instead of obtaining satisfaction a counter-petition was handed in, accusing him of having wounded the son of Sofou Hodja, the youth who was alleged to have been subsequently killed by Nazaret Berberian. The witnesses against him were the same men he had named as his assailants. He was condemned to death and is in the Yozgat prison.

9. Archimandrite Taniel of the Derevank Monastry, near Cesarea. No one of that name and description has been imprisoned in this vilayet in connection with the recent events of the last two years. He must be the priest Daniel, son of Parsekh, of Derevank, aged 43, condemned by the Angora Court in May 1893. His name will be found sixth on the list in the *procès-verbal* of that trial, and he must have been the individual referred to in the following Reuter's telegram, dated, Tripoli, 19th September, 1893:—

"A Turkish transport has arrived here with nine Armenian political prisoners. . . Among them are Bishop Daniel Achikian, from Derevank," &c.

The last letter received from one of the prisoners at Tripoli (Syria), two months ago, mentions him as being well, so he must be there still.

Angora, March 25, 1895.

No. 27.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 8.)

(No. 108.) *Vienna, April 5, 1895.*

My Lord,

COUNT KÁLNOKY asked me the other day if I had received any details of the interview held with the Sultan by Sir Philip Currie, when the Armenian troubles were discussed; and if I had any knowledge of the recommendations which the latter, in concert with his French and Russian colleagues, is believed to be prepared to make to His Imperial Majesty in regard to them.

I said that I knew no details beyond the condensed summary of the conversation given by Sir Philip in his telegram to your Lordship No. 102 of the 22nd ultimo, which I briefly recounted to his Excellency.

Count Kálnoky observed that the Sultan, who really appears to have been kept in ignorance of the truth, has shown symptoms of a disposition to speak on the matter to Baron Calice, but the latter will retain his attitude of strict reserve.

I said that Baron Calice has been so long at Constantinople, and consequently the Sultan is so much accustomed to him, that it seemed to me that his Excellency might profitably take advantage of any opportunity of opening His Imperial Majesty's eyes to the gravity of the danger which persistent ignoring of the truth must occasion.

Count Kálnoky replied that he did not know that Baron Calice could do any good in such a way; but that, at any rate, he himself had long ago decided that this Government should hold itself absolutely aloof from the Armenian question; and as time goes on, this decision becomes more and more confirmed. If it comes to the point of siding with the Sultan or with the three Powers, the latter may rely on his sympathy with their views, but beyond this his reserve will not allow him to go.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 28.

Mr. Gosselin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 8.)

(No. 80. Confidential.) *Berlin, April 5, 1895.*

My Lord,

TEWFIK PASHA, the Turkish Ambassador here, asked me the other day whether I had received any news of the progress of the Commission now investigating the alleged outrages in Armenia. His Excellency said that he had read the letters published by the "Daily Telegraph" from their special correspondent in Armenia, and hoped that it would be proved that the statements of that journalist had been greatly exaggerated.

I replied that if only a tithe of the allegations turned out to be true it would show the absolute necessity for a reform of the local administration.

Tewfik Pasha said that it would be difficult for the Sultan to grant autonomous concessions to the Armenians alone; that such a course would be a premium on disaffection; and that more than once, when asked for his opinion by the Porte, he had urged that it would be more prudent to bestow local reforms on all the populations of the Empire.

Russia, said his Excellency, would never allow an autonomous Armenia to be erected on her frontier; of this he had an absolute certainty; in fact, the Russian Government were doing their best at the present moment to repress and exterminate all Armenian national life in the trans-Caucasian provinces.

I told his Excellency that, however this might be, the Armenians over the border enjoyed at least the elementary rights to live and to hold property, and that this could hardly be said to be the case in certain districts in Asiatic Turkey.

Curiously enough, his Excellency's remarks as to the attempts of the Russian Administration at Tiflis to Russianize the Armenian population are confirmed by the "Times" St. Petersburgh correspondent, in a letter published in the "Times" of yesterday, to which I would venture to draw your Lordship's attention.

Baron von Marschall mentioned incidentally to-day that he had heard that the Sultan was much disturbed by the Commission of Inquiry; that the existing crisis was

entirely due to His Majesty's *laisser-aller* policy; and that he anticipated that there would be a great outcry in England when the *procès-verbaux* of the Commission were published, especially if Mr. Gladstone had made his expected "pronouncement" against the continued ill-treatment of the Armenian subjects of the Porte.

I have, &c.

(Signed) MARTIN GOSSELIN

No. 29.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 8.)

(No. 127.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 8, 1895, 11·45 A.M.*

I HAVE received a telegram from Mr. Graves, inquiring whether the Delegates might be allowed to undertake the distribution of the sum of 100*l.* which the "Daily Telegraph" has subscribed for the most pressing needs of the inhabitants of the Sassoon district. I replied that the Delegates had better not take any direct part in the distribution, and similar instructions have been sent by my colleagues.

No. 30.

Sir M. Durand to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 9.)

(No. 17.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Tehran, April 9, 1895.*

I HAVE authorized Mr. Paton's return to Tabreez, as he is unable to obtain any further information from the Armenian refugees.

No. 31.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 143.) *Foreign Office, April 9, 1895.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your despatch No. 192 of the 28th ultimo, reporting your conversation with the Grand Vizier on the 21st ultimo with respect to the imprisonment of Armenians, and the proceedings of the Commission of Inquiry at Moush.

I approve the language held to his Highness by your Excellency on that occasion.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 32.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 144.) *Foreign Office, April 9, 1895.*

Sir,

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your despatch No. 189 of the 27th ultimo, giving a full report of the discussion on Armenian affairs which took place at your audience of the Sultan on the 21st ultimo.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approve your Excellency's language to the Sultan on that occasion.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 33.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 115.) *Foreign Office, April 9, 1895.*

Sir,

I N a despatch dated the 30th ultimo Her Majesty's Consul-General at Salonica has furnished your Excellency with a report from Mr. Vice-Consul Blakeney at Prevesa as to the alleged imprisonment and ill-treatment at Janina of an Armenian lawyer named Aghop Renzi Ghazarian, who was conveyed there under escort from Aleppo.

I shall be glad if your Excellency will make inquiries into this case, and particularly as to the ill-treatment to which the prisoner is supposed to be subjected.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 34.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 10.)

(No. 128.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 10, 1895, 7·45 P.M.*

I HEAR that the Grand Vizier and Minister for Foreign Affairs were summoned to the Palace on Monday to consider what answer should be returned to our programme of reforms when presented, and to consider the question of the reforms which are to be elaborated by the Turkish Commission of Reform.

I have received a message from the Sultan that the Turkish Commission will commence its labours very shortly.

No. 35.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 10.)

(No. 129.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 10, 1895, 7·45 P.M.*

I HAVE received through Said Pasha a message from the Sultan to the effect that His Majesty regrets to learn that Mr. Gladstone is soon to deliver another speech on the Armenian question. His last speech had done a great deal of harm, and His Majesty begged me to urge Her Majesty's Government to prevent him, if possible, speaking again, or, at any rate, to induce him to be more moderate in his language. It was not advisable that Mr. Gladstone should revert to the subject when the Sassoon Commission was inquiring into events on the spot, and a Commission of Reforms had been appointed by His Majesty.

No. 36.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Foreign Office, April 10, 1895.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Kimberley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th ultimo relative to the regrettable incident which occurred on the occasion of the opening of the Protestant school at Ordou.

A despatch has been received from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople forwarding two communications on the subject from Mr. Dwight, copies of which are inclosed herewith.[a]

On hearing of the attack on the school, Sir Philip Currie at once represented the state of affairs to the Grand Vizier, and received assurances from his Highness that the matter would be looked into and proper measures taken.

[a] See Confidential Paper No. [1] Inclosures in No. 292.

You will perceive from Mr. Dwight's letter of the 18th ultimo that the question is apparently settled, the Municipality of the town having bought the Protestant parsonage for 800*l.*, and the Protestants having been authorized to build both church and school upon the site assigned to them.

The Greeks, on the other hand, have been called upon to pay 150*l.* to the Municipality for injuries inflicted on the building by the mob.

In these circumstances, Lord Kimberley trusts that this unfortunate incident may now be looked upon as terminated.

I am, &c.

(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 37.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 11.)

(No. 130.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 11, 1895, 3·15 P.M.*

HER Majesty's Consul at Beyrout telegraphs that orders for the levy of sixteen battalions of Redifs in the district of Aleppo have been received at the head-quarters of the 5th Army Corps, and that Erzeroum is their reported destination.

No. 38.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 153.) *Foreign Office, April 12, 1895.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 209 of the 4th instant, inclosing a report from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora on certain Armenians imprisoned at Yozgat.

In your despatch No. 161 of the 7th October last, you informed me that you had brought the case of these prisoners to the notice of the Grand Vizier. You will no doubt take any further steps which you may consider likely to procure a mitigation of their sentences.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 39.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 33.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April 13, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 129 of the 10th instant as to the anxiety of the Sultan about any future public utterances by Mr. Gladstone on Armenian affairs.

Your Excellency should point out that Her Majesty's Government have no control over Mr. Gladstone, and that it is impossible for them to give any assurances on his behalf.

A letter written by him appeared in the "Times" of the 11th instant, stating that he shall do all in his power to protect the cause of justice in Armenia, but that he is compelled to refuse all public meetings and celebrations whatever, for which he is no longer fit.

No. 10.

Sir M. Durand to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 20.) *Tehran, March* 11, 1896.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the telegraphic correspondence that has passed between your Lordship and this Legation as to the possibility of obtaining from the refugees who have come over the frontier into Persian territory information respecting the alleged massacres of Armenians in the districts of Sassoon and Mosch, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copies of a letter and three Reports which have been addressed by Mr. Paton to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabriz, giving such information as he has been able to collect from the few fugitives he has found in the neighbourhood of Salmas and Khoi.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. M. DURAND.

Inclosure 1 in No. 10.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

English Mission, Urumia, February 17, 1895.

Dear Mr. Wood,

AFTER rather a disagreeable journey, rendered more so by the wretched animals provided in the name of "ekspat" horses, I arrived in Dilman (Salmas) on Monday morning, the 11th February.

On the road, I had been turning over in my mind the object of my mission, and came to the conclusion that the plain of Salmas was a much more likely place than that of Urumia in which to find fugitives from the late massacres at Sassoon and Mosch.

Among other things that led me to form this opinion were the facts (1) that on the plain of Salmas are villages exclusively inhabited by Armenians, whose lives might naturally be expected to make for; and (2) that as the greater number of fugitives are said to have fled towards Persia, I expected those who might lose their way in seeking that country were likely to strike the caravan route into Persia passing through Khoi.

Accordingly, on reaching Dilman, in place of going on to Urumia, I immediately set out, under a drenching rain, for Haftawan, an Armenian village of about 120 houses and distant from Dilman about half a farsakh.

There I set quietly to work to the endeavour to find out if any fugitives had reached that village. I was at first assured that none had been heard of in that neighbourhood, but the following day I got news from four men, claiming to be from the district where massacres occurred, and who had arrived on the very day I reached Dilman. I then arranged to see one of the men and after a careful examination, re-examination, and cross-examination the following morning, I felt convinced that this man was genuine. I therefore saw the others separately, and found that one of the others were from a village in the same district. The second man from Mutchitlu corroborated the story of the first. village Mutchitlu was the first man examined, and that the two others were from a vil-nation was easily forthcoming.

I inclose a copy of the statement taken from the first man interviewed, which, when put into narrative form, I consider a wonderfully connected and intelligible account from such a humble and uneducated specimen of humanity.

Of course, you must not think that the information came from him so connectedly as I hope it is written, otherwise one might think it was a got-up story, but the facts, slowly elicited, without any leading questions, I have strung together, leaving out all that was superfluous.

The party who found these men had perceived them loitering about the bazaar, and seeing they were strangers entered into conversation with them. At first they seemed afraid to tell from what district they had come, but eventually told him their story. Their dialect is very different from that of the Salmas neighbourhood.

I called on the "Vartabet" (monk) of the village, and in the course of conversation I discovered that he had at one time officiated in the village from which the first man examined came, and I found that his description of the place coincided with what the man had said, only the Vartabet said that while he was there the village had about 200 houses, but he knew that it had dwindled down to nothing now. This Vartabet told me that he could give me no information about the massacres except what had been written to him by friends in the neighbourhood, and he knew of no fugitives having reached Haftawan. Without letting him know I had any special mission to make any inquiries, I said I would be obliged if he could let me know if any of them came to him (which they were most likely to do), as I was personally much interested in the matter. This he promised to do. I have also got the missionaries interested in the matter of getting first-hand information, and then I thought it advisable to leave the district while inquiries were going on so as to prevent any suspicion on the part of outsiders that I was interested in these inquiries.

I therefore started for Gavillan on Thursday, a village about 5 farsakhs from Dilman, where I heard there was a man who had passed through the district after the massacres, and had information on the subject, but after finding him out and questioning him I found he had not passed through the immediate neighbourhood, had seen nothing himself and was only able to recount what had been told him by a Mr. Cole, in Bitlis. I did not consider his evidence worth recording, it not being quite what was wanted.

On Friday morning I started for Urumia, and arrived there about 1 o'clock.

Nothing is known of any fugitives having reached this place, and as it is a large city, it will take a little time to find out. I have several agencies at work to try to discover any refugees, but my opinion (which is shared with others here) is that Salmas and Khoi are the most likely districts, this not being at all an Armenian stronghold.

I propose, therefore, to wait here in Urumia till I hear from you, during which time something may turn up. Of course, in going to Haftawan, I practically did not go out of my route towards Urumia, but if you can find out from Tehran by telegraph if they approve of my going towards Khoi or any place about the borders where I may hear of these fugitives, or if they just wish me to remain in one district on the chance of their reaching that particular place, it would be help to me, as I do not know exactly how they wish me to act in this respect; if the latter is the case, then I would suggest that I should remain somewhere in the Salmas plain or Khoi.

It is very evident that they have not reached Persian territory in any number, as with the one exception of those in Haftawan I have heard of no others. It is believed, however, that, as the weather becomes more open, those who have been unable to make their way to Persian territory on account of the rigours of winter, and who have arrived, will gradually reach these parts.

Many of the people on the Salmas plain have friends in the region of the massacres, so that it is not unlikely they may seek them out in their extremity.

The greater number, of course, have made for Persian territory, but as I hear the Russians refuse to have them there, that is another reason for expecting that eventually they may gravitate towards Persia.

It was a very lucky stroke finding these four men as I did, for there is certainly considerable difficulty in finding any more here at least.

The subject of the recent massacres is the burning question among the Armenians here just now, and many have received direct news from their friends in the district. The principal details are related by all are singularly corroborative, but these, of course, are already public property, and no doubt have been reported through Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

It is reported here that the Mussulmans in the district are saying, "Wait till we see what their European friends do for them in Turkey, and then if nothing is done, we shall wipe them out, *i.e.*, the Armenians and Nestorians." Of course this may be the usual Persian bluster, but sometimes a straw does show the wind blows.

If Tehran approves of my going to Salmas district alone, if you telegraph the word "Baliy" (yes) I shall understand, and remove there shortly after receipt. If they approve of my going to Khoi alone, if you telegraph the word "Inshallah" I shall remove there. If they approve of my going to either or both of these I shall understand the word "Ejaza" (Friday). If they leave it open for me to go wherever I have reason to believe fugitives are to be found between Tabriz and the Turkish frontier, "Shamba" (Saturday).

Mr. Jenkin of the English Mission, is going up into the mountains very soon, but

more in south-eastern direction from Lake Van, and I have asked him to gather what he can there.

I think there is nothing further to report at present.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 40.

Information obtained by Mr. Paton with regard to Massacres in Turkish Armenia.

BARON GRIGOR MASSESSIAN, of Malchitla, which is a village consisting of 35 houses (at one time 300), and distant from Moosh 12 hours, says:—

The Chief of the village was Ishan B. Garabed. A man by the name of Gevork had escaped from Sassoon to Malchitla, in the plain of Moosh.

He related to the villagers that a massacre had taken place at Sassoon, and that the few who had escaped were making their way across to mountains as best they could.

There were no Armenians left. They were either killed or in flight.

He (Baron Grigor) said there must have been 13,000 slain. He knew that the Vank† St. Garabed had been gutted, though it had not been entirely destroyed.

This Vank is in the Moosh plain. He saw heaps of the bodies of men, women, and children who had been slain.

He had heard that women had been outraged, but had seen nothing of this himself.

Shortly after the report about the massacre at Sassoon the same troops and Kurds who had been engaged in that massacre approached Moosh.

The Kurds belong to the Hesnontsi, Tabiantsi, and Sibgantsi tribes, under the leadership of Ali Bey and Moussa Bey. This tribe lived within one to ten hours ride of the city of Moosh.

There would be about 1,000 men of the regular army engaged in the slaughter, and they were said to have come from Sivas.

When they came from Sassoon they encountered some influential citizens of Moosh (Armenians):

These they charged with having in their houses guns, pistols, ammunition, cannon, &c., and said they were preparing for a rebellion against the Government.

This the Armenians denied, and after some words were exchanged, a fight ensued in which, in endeavouring to protect themselves, the Armenians killed a few Kurds. This was evidently the excuse the Kurds and soldiers were waiting for in order to begin the general slaughter which shortly after ensued.

Among the number some wealthy Armenians were killed. Among others were Reise Abraham, Reise Alo, Reise Semon, and Gaspar, a merchant. Many others were killed to the number of about 950 or 1,000, both Kurds and soldiers being engaged in the work of death.

Houses were looted and violence was offered to women, but he saw no women violated, although he heard that there were some.

He did not see this slaughter himself, but a few days later he heard that his son, who was a servant in Moosh, had been killed, and when he went to recover his son's body he saw fifteen women slaughtered before his eyes, two of the women heavy with child being ripped open, and the unborn child fixed on the end of a spear.

He secured his son's body and returned to his village.

About twenty days later he was bringing in wheat when the Kurds swept down upon them and, severely cutting his hand, drove him and his people off and carried away their cattle.

A few days later the Kurds tried to carry off all the flocks of Matchitla, and the Armenians tried to protect them.

Seven Armenians were killed in the fight and three Kurds. They kept their herds, but as the three Kurds had been killed they were afraid of another attack, and all fled with their families to the mountains.

His home was about eighteen hours' ride from Bitlis, but after wandering about

* Equivalent to Mr.

† Cathedral.

three or four days he and another man, Sarkisian, with their wives and children approached Bitlis.

Here he was arrested by the Turkish officials, who asked why a poor man in rags, as he was, was trying to run away. Through the lies of a wealthy Armenian of that place he passed him off as his servant, and eventually escaped. He with the others then went on to Van. From Van to Sasai, and from thence to Kotom. From Kotom they came on to Habashi, where there were two Armenian houses.

The Armenians gave them a load of flour to divide among them. From that place they had taken thirteen days to reach Haftawan, and they arrived there on the same day that I arrived (11th February).

Baron Grigor had been in Sassoon, and described the place well, and gave a good description of the surrounding country, so that he stood well the test of his knowledge of the part where he professed to come from.

Sarkisean, a man from the same country, corroborated this statement in essential points as far as his knowledge carried him.

The other men were Moses Makarian, wife, mother, and sisters (two) from the village of Yangha (two days distance from Moosh), which formerly contained 400 houses, but now only 200.

Haritaun Gregorian, from same place.

Note.—These men could only say they were fleeing owing to the rumours they had heard of the massacre, but could give no evidence.

Sarkisean, from Matchilu, mother, two sisters, and brother.

They all met on the mountains between Bitlis and Van, and they encountered fugitives fleeing towards Kars. They had intended going to Russian territory, but lost their way on the mountains and found their way into Persian territory.

Urumia, February 17, 1895.

Inclosure 3 in No. 40.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Urumia, February 24, 1895.

Dear Mr. Wood,

AS I anticipated, my investigations here have only had a negative result.

I myself have visited a number of the most likely places in the Urumia plain, and have made inquiries quietly in most of the other surrounding villages, but in only one place had there been seen any refugees from the recent massacres. I got news of four men from the Moosh district having been at the village of Ikkinghaj (about 5 farsakhs from Urumia), and at once tried to get into communication with them, but found they had left for Salmas. On comparing dates, &c., I find they are without doubt the same that I saw in Salmas. I have learned by a letter from Salmas (which I received to-day) that the men I interviewed have been kindly received by the Vartabeds in Haftewan, who are getting up a subscription for them, and are housing, clothing, and feeding them in the meantime. One of these Vartabeds, who was at one time in charge of the Sassoon and Moosh districts, corroborates their statements with regard to the districts. I am also informed in the letter from Salmas that the places from which the Kurds (who took part in the outrages) come from are more correctly spelt Hasnantsi, Jahransi, and Lighantsi.

The leaders were, as I have already written, Ali Beg and Moosa Beg. The Hamedia soldiery and some regular troops from a distance also took part in the massacre. I have just got news from an Armenian, who has recently come from Khoi, that he has not heard of any fugitives having reached these places. I have, however, received your telegram of yesterday authorizing me to go to Salmas or Khoi, and your letter of the 21st instant, and I shall accordingly leave this to-morrow for Salmas, where I shall remain for a few days, and then go on to Khoi. When I leave Salmas for Khoi I shall telegraph the word "sarma" = cold.

Yours, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

Inclosure 4 in No. 40.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Haftawan (Salmas), March 3, 1895.

Dear Mr. Wood,

AS proposed in my last communication to you, I left Urumia on Monday morning for Haftawan, Salmas. On the road to that place I visited one or two villages, but without any success.

On Tuesday I began work on Salmas plain. There are in all twenty-seven villages on this plain, in which Armenians are to be found, Haftewan being the largest and most influential, and from all accounts recognized as the most patriotic. This place, from all I can gather, is the most likely village for any Armenians in distress to make for. It was so in the case of those four men from Matchithu (Mejethu), &c. It appears they left their families in Kotur, and came on here for assistance.

Many of those, also, who came over with the large exodus from Adeljivaz have settled here.

There are still, however, thirty families of those who came over settled at Khoi. I am informed that the ground at Adeljivaz and along the northern shore of Van is mostly of the very best agricultural description, and at one time was well cultivated by the Armenians; but now it is almost depopulated. I shall endeavour to get some information from the people of Adeljivaz when I go to Khoi.

During the time I have been here I have made daily excursions to places which were said to contain something of interest, passing through as many villages as possible and gleaning information here and there as quietly and provoking as little suspicion as I could.

From villages I have not been able to overtake personally I have received information directly and indirectly, but all with the same result. Apparently there are immigrants here and there about the plain, driven from different districts over the border, unable to live owing to insupportable oppression and cruelty.

In no case, however, have I been able to discover any refugees from the immediate district of Sassoon and Moosh.

Yesterday, I saw three men who had just arrived here from Nurashen, on the northern shore of Lake Van, having been deprived of all their little possessions, and being left no means of subsistence. They had heard of no fugitives from Sassoon or Moosh, and from all I have heard, while it is not so difficult for people from those districts to make towards Kars and the Russian frontier, it is extremely difficult for them to get to the Persian frontier at present as all the roads are closed.

I shall go on to Khoi to-morrow, though I fear there is nothing to be done there either.

As I mentioned in my first letter to you, there are plenty of stories circulating here about the massacres, but as they are to be had in most of the newspapers, whether foreign or British, I have not thought it necessary to report them, their authenticity being doubtful; and I understand it is first-hand evidence that is wanted from eye-witnesses.

However, M. Avedissian, Director of the Armenian Schools here, who appears somewhat moderate in his views, gives me the names of twenty-five villages which, he has heard by letter from Van, have been destroyed, and the inhabitants either murdered or driven into the mountains.

Each Armenian house or family at Sassoon is calculated to have an average of twelve members, though some have as many as forty to sixty members.

His informant estimates the number murdered or driven forth at from 11,000 to 12,000, but of that number he only believes about 3,000 have been actually killed, while the others have been rendered homeless.

The names of the villages wholly destroyed are—

	Houses.		Houses.
Aglipi	95	Khelhovid	16
Aliantz	35	Kremuri	30
Baluntun	100	Mazze	25
Eghgart	20	Mozren	180
Hakmak	21	Perm	20
Harth	26	Purkh	16
Heghin	30	Schbank	70
Hloghnk	15	Senal	80
Hostod	40	Shenig	25
Kaipermin	20	Talvooiz	32
Kleiguenen	120	Tavalink	25
Kleiguzan	11	Tzover	
Khedaw			

Besides these there are eleven villages partially destroyed, or whose Chief Priests' and chief villagers' houses are burned down and their owners murdered.

I shall remain in Khoi until I get further instructions from you; but if the Government wish me to remain any longer, perhaps the most central and probably the most likely place will be Haftawan. It is thought some fugitives may turn up here later when the roads are open, but just at present there seems to be little chance.

No doubt what the Foreign Office heard of was the immigrants from Adeljivaz.

Whatever the people may surmise with regard to my visit here, I think, so far, it has been kept fairly quiet, as I heard last night that the Agent for Foreign Affairs here was making inquiry as to the object of my visit.

Awaiting further instructions, believe me, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

P.S.—I have just heard that a man has arrived here from the Moosh district this afternoon, who has lost his father, mother, and brother in the massacre; so that, in order to see him, I shall require to wait here another day, but shall telegraph, as I said in last letter, when I leave for Khoi. It may be a false alarm, like some others I have had.

R. M. P.

No. 41.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 85.) *St. Petersburgh, April 8, 1895.*

My Lord,

ON the receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 85 of the 20th ultimo I did not fail to inform Prince Lobanoff that Her Majesty's Consular officers in North-West Persia had heard that some Armenians from the disturbed districts of Asia Minor had taken refuge at Erivan, and I reminded his Excellency that I had been informed by Count Kapnist that he did not anticipate any objection to such refugees being examined as to the events which had taken place at Sassoon.

Prince Lobanoff replied that he had received no information of the arrival of such refugees, but that he would put himself in communication with the local authorities on the subject.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

No. 42.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 86.) *St. Petersburgh, April* 8, 1895.

My Lord,

PRINCE LOBANOFF mentioned to me in conversation some days ago that he had received a long Petition with numerous signatures, which had been addressed to the Emperor by the Armenian Society at Calcutta. The Petition was being examined by the Asiatic Department, and his Excellency would in due course submit it to the Emperor, but he doubted whether His Majesty would return any reply, as His Majesty would probably not think it advisable to enter into correspondence with Armenian Societies in foreign countries.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 43.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 90.) *St. Petersburgh, April* 10, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 97 of the 6th instant, I have the honour to report that I communicated to Prince Lobanoff this afternoon the substance of Sir P. Currie's telegram to your Lordship No. 124 of the 5th instant, reporting the conversation his Excellency had had with the Sultan on that day on the subject of Armenian reforms.

Prince Lobanoff repeated what he had said to me on a previous occasion, as reported in my despatch No. 81 of the 28th ultimo, that he was awaiting with interest to be made acquainted with the scheme of reforms which the Ambassadors at Constantinople might devise, as, although he was well acquainted with Armenians, he would be puzzled to say where Armenia was.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 44.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 210.) *Constantinople, April* 9, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 176 of the 20th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, giving further particulars respecting the outrage on Armenians at Tchipod, and a list of the wounded.

I have, &c.

(For Sir P. Currie),

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 44.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, March 21, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 8th instant, I have the honour to add the following details, which have reached me from an Armenian source, of the outrage at the village of Tchipod, in the Ispir Caza.

It is stated that on the 27th December a number of Turks from the neighbourhood of Tchipod came and took forcible possession of a piece of land belonging to the Armenians of the village. The latter endeavoured to resist, but, being unarmed, were unable to make head against the Turks, who used their arms freely, and thirteen of

them, whose names are given in the annexed list, were more or less seriously wounded. The Turks then made for the village, and proceeded to ill-treat and violate the women and girls, one of whom, named Martha, was killed in consequence of the resistance she made in defending her honour; while a child was killed, whose cries inconvenienced the ravishers of its mother and sister.

Some days later, a Captain of Police came round tax-gathering, and, on learning what had occurred, approved the action of the Turks; he is also said to have broken into the house of an Armenian woman and violated her.

The statement made in my above-mentioned despatch, to the effect that the Armenians were prevented by threats from making any complaint, is confirmed, and it is added that, before letting them leave their village, for any business, guarantees for their silence while in town are exacted from them by the Turks.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

List of Wounded.

Megnerditch, son of Kapriel.
Toros, son of Kapriel.
Obannes, son of Der Kevork.
Vartan, son of Der Kevork.
Ghazar, son of Der Kevork.
Ghazar, son of Der Kapriel.
Agop, son of Ghazar.
Krikor, son of Babo.
Pilos, son of Arakel.
Kinos, son of Eremia.
Kaloust, son of Sarkis.
Hambarsouk, son of Arakel.
Agop, son of Minas.

No. 45.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 211.) *Constantinople, April* 9, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing a despatch from Mr. Hallward on the subject of the levy of blood-money for the murder of two Kurds near the village of Sikhkeh.

I have, &c.

(For Sir P. Currie),

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 45.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, March 21, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the subject of the levy of blood-money, under a sentence of the Sheri Court, for the murder of two Kurds near the village of Sikhkeh, near Van. Mr. Hallward also incloses a copy in Turkish of the notice served upon the inhabitants of Sikhkeh for payment of the sum assessed, and points out the irregularity of such a sentence being pronounced by the Sheri Court, when the judicial authorities had failed to establish a case against any of the villagers, and no sentence had been pronounced by the competent Criminal Court.

This case is the same referred to in the inclosure to my despatch of the 29th June, 1892, and Mr. Fitzmaurice's of the 8th November, 1892.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

Inclosure 2 in No. 45.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, March 12, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to Mr. Fitzmaurice's despatch of the 20th June, 1892, and Mr. Dovey's of the 8th November, 1892, respecting the murder of two Kurds near the Armenian village of Sikhkeh in the month of June 1892, I have the honour to report that the sentence of the Sheri Court of Van condemning the villagers to pay blood-money for the two lives has been confirmed by the "Tetwakhané" (Chief Religious Court of Constantinople) with a slight reduction of the sum, making it about £T. 600, and a demand for payment of half that amount, that is, the blood-money for one of the Kurds, has been served on the villagers.

I would beg to call your special attention to this case.

Four Kurds left Van on the evening of the 12th June, 1892, to go to their village, about ten hours from here, when they were attacked just outside the Van Gardens, at about a mile from the village of Sikhkeh, and one of them was killed and another mortally wounded. The latter got as far as the village, where he died in a few hours. It is said that their assailants were Turks, and that the quarrel was about a woman, but I have no positive information on this point.

Several of the villagers were arrested and kept in prison for some time, but no case being found against them, they were released. The case was not tried before the Criminal Court, but was taken before the Sheri (Moslem Religious) Court, which condemned the whole village to payment of blood-money on the ground that, though the perpetrators of the crime were not known, the murders having been committed near the village, the villagers must be held responsible.

Obviously the first persons to be interrogated and held primarily responsible were the two companions of the dead men, but they were allowed to go to their village, and were, I am assured, not interrogated at all.

The entire innocence of the Armenian villagers, whose houses were immediately searched by the police, is best proved by the fact that the local legal authorities could make out no case against them, for the quality of mercy is certainly not strained where Armenians are concerned, and if there had been any sort of evidence against them it would probably have been made the most of.

The action of the authorities in referring the case to the Sheri Court is based on Article 171 of the Criminal Code, which provides that for the protection of personal interests the heirs of a murdered man, if there be any, can refer their claim for personal rights to the Sheri Courts. This I take to mean that they can make good their claim for blood-money against the estate of the murderer, the latter having been identified and duly convicted before the Criminal Court. But if the Article be taken to mean that, when in the opinion of the local Law Officers (Procureur-Général and Juge d'Instruction) a murder cannot be brought home to any one, the case can be referred straight to the Sheri Court without reference to the Criminal Court, the principle thus admitted would be a most dangerous one, especially in this part of the country where the bias of the Government against the Christians is so strong, as in case of one Kurd killing another it would be sufficient for the murderer to take the body of the murdered man to an Armenian village, and for the authorities to declare that the crime could not be proved against any one, in order that a claim for blood-money might be made good against the inhabitants of the village where the body was found.

It seems impossible that such an interpretation of the law can be admitted, or that sentence can be pronounced in a criminal case by the Sheri Court without a sentence first being given by the Criminal Court.

I would therefore venture to express a hope that, in the interest both of law and equity, this case may be brought to the notice of the proper authorities in Constantinople, in order that the sentence of the Sheri Court be revised, and some means taken to save the inhabitants of Sikhkeh, who are poor, and cannot afford to pay such a sum, from undergoing a grievous injustice.

I beg to inclose copy in Turkish of the notice served on the villagers.

I have, &c.

(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 46.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 15.)

(No. 212.)

Constantinople, April 9, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 209 of the 4th instant I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora, on the subject of the case of Dr. Dikran Sunni.

I have, &c.

(For Sir P. Currie),

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 46.

Consul Cumberbatch to Sir P. Currie.

Angora, March 29, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to send your Excellency a translation of a letter received by me from the wife of Dr. Dikran Sunni, one of the Armenians in the Yozgat prison, and referred to in my despatch of the 25th instant.

Mrs. Sunni appeals for intervention on behalf of her husband and his companions, whose health, she says, has been affected by their long and unjust confinement.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. A. CUMBERBATCH.

Inclosure 1 in No. 46.

Mrs. Dikran Sunni to Consul Cumberbatch.

(Translation.)

Yozgat, March 6 (18), 1895.

My Noble Sir,

THOUGH the motive which induces me to address you this humble petition, viz.—our great misery—is a fact already well known to you, yet new events compel us to appeal again to your kind assistance. Hundreds of innocent prisoners already owe their liberation from the chains and miseries of prison to your Government's kind intervention; and, although the release of the remaining seven has not as yet been effected, yet we do not ignore your Government's exertions on their behalf. But, seeing that, on one hand, the dampness and darkness of the prison are undermining their health, and, on the other hand, the ill-treatment they are being subjected to every day has broken down their spirits, and has reached a stage which cannot be borne any longer, we venture to make an appeal herewith for your kind mediation.

It is already known to you, Sir, that four out of these seven prisoners are accused of being the murderers of the three Turks killed during the "Church" conflict of the 12th December, and are condemned upon the depositions of false witnesses prepared by that vindictive Mustafa Pasha, President of the Court-martial, composed of the so-called "Administrators of Justice," sent by His Imperial Majesty, whilst the prisoners' explanations in their own defence were not deemed worthy of a hearing and were not taken into consideration.

The seven prisoners whose names though already known to you may deserve a repetition, viz., Hampartzoum and Hagopdjen Effendis, Payazian, Dr. Dikran Sunni, Eminian Serope Effendi, Tekirian Haroutioun (Artin) Effendi, Berberian Nazareth Effendi, and Margoss Ghrabethian Effendi, are unjustly kept lying for fifteen months in that dark and damp prison, victims merely of Mustafa Pasha's pleasure. Why, because whilst on the one hand they were not allowed to open their mouths or say a word in defence of their innocence, on the other hand, whenever the evidence of the false witnesses was contradictory, the Court was adjourned, and the witnesses were taught their lesson more fully in the course of the following few days.

We presume that the unmentionable and insulting, terrorizing expressions of Mustafa Pasha concerning the English and Russians are already known to you.

In short, we may say that neither of the prisoners have any strength left in them to endure any longer the hardships of the prison, nor have we—away from our husbands—

the opportunity nor the power to console them or wipe their tears. Oh! can you not realize the misery of a woman who has seen her father cruelly strangled to death by the savage and bloodthirsty Turks, and her husband condemned to death on the false accusation of the same Turks? Perhaps the bitter cries of such a woman who has seen her husband taken away from her side will find a readier echo in the heart of Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen, herself also a woman.

It is with the purpose of entreating her benevolent sympathy that I have ventured to appeal to your kind mediation.

(Signed) Mme. AZNIV. D. SUNNI.

No. 47.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 15.)

(No. 215.)

Constantinople, April 9, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to communicate to your Lordship the following messages which I have received from Saïd Pasha.

According to a telegram from Bitlis, dated the 14th March, the Moukhtar of the village of Kekeili (district of Boulanik), Serkis by name, with ten other Armenians and the members of the Council of Elders, prevented the Muezzin of the village from calling the usual prayers.

This fact is confirmed by seven Mussulmans and three Armenians, and Serkis himself has admitted his guilt. He has been arrested, as will be the others implicated.

A telegram has also been received from the Vali of Sivas reporting that Nazaret Effendi, member of the Administrative Council of the vilayet, was assaulted by three masked Armenians as he came out of church, and slightly wounded. Measures have been taken to arrest the guilty.

I have, &c.
(For Sir Philip Currie),
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

No. 48.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 15.)

(No. 216.)

Pera, April 9, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to the Protocol of the sixth sitting of the Commission at Mousb, inclosed in my despatch No. 149 of the 6th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a letter which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch on the 4th instant, in regard to the anti-Armenian evidence of the priests of the Convent of Sourpe.

I have, &c.
(For Sir P. Currie),
(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 48.

The Armenian Patriarch to Sir P. Currie.

Le 4 Avril, 1895.

DES renseignements arrivés de Mouche, ont annoncé que les Archimandrites Yessayi et Garabeth, du Convent de Sourpe Garabeth (Tchanli Monastir), situé près de cette ville, ainsi que le prêtre Der-Parsegh, desservant l'une des églises Arméniennes de Mouche, ont fait devant la Commission d'Enquête de Sassoun des déclarations contraires aux faits et à la vérité.

Une connaissance succincte des antécédents des dits ecclésiastiques et de leur position tant vis-à-vis l'autorité religieuse que le Gouvernement Impérial, suffit pour comprendre la juste valeur de ces dépositions, démenties, d'ailleurs par les faits et dépourvues de toute importance. Ces ecclésiastiques se trouvent parfaitement dans le rôle tracé par leur vie passée, en se faisant l'écho de l'imposture et en servant d'organe à ceux qui ont intérêt à dénaturer la vérité.

Les Archimandrites Yessayi et Garabeth se sont rendus coupables des manquements les plus graves à leurs devoirs, tels que jeter la perturbation parmi les membres de la congrégation dans un but d'intérêt illicite, se trouver en état de rébellion contre leurs chefs hiérarchiques, commettre des fraudes dans les affaires d'argent à eux confiées, abjurer la religion nationale pour se soustraire au jugement et à la punition, &c. Il y a plusieurs années ces mêmes ecclésiastiques avaient, de même, attiré sur eux le mécontentement du Gouvernement Impérial: à diverses époques de très graves punitions leur ont été infligées, tant comme mesures canoniques décidées par l'autorité religieuse, que sur l'avertissement de la Sublime Porte.

Ainsi, les dits ecclésiastiques ont été à plusieurs reprises éloignés de leur patrie; en 1866, ils ont été appelés à Constantinople par l'entremise du Gouvernement Impérial, jugés devant l'autorité ecclésiastique et exilés au Couvent de Jérusalem, pour être mis en pénitence. Ayant pourtant continué, à l'expiration de cet exil, leur conduite contraire aux devoirs incombant à tout ecclésiastique, ils ont été condamnés par le Conseil Ecclésiastique du Patriarcat à être dépouillés de leur sacerdoce. Mais par suite de la médiation que Mgr. Megueréditch Kherimian, ancien Archevêque Supérieur du dit couvent, depuis Catholicos Suprême de tous les Arméniens, avait faite, par esprit de miséricorde, cette décision n'a pas été mise en exécution, sous condition que les dits Archimandrites entreraient dans les voies du respect de leurs devoirs, et il a été jugé suffisant de les éloigner de toute fonction, pour les envoyer à des couvents, où ils resteraient en pénitence.

Quoique les deux Archimandrites précités aient pu plus tard s'emparer de diverses fonctions, grâce à une vie d'apparence correcte, l'inimitié de Tahsin Pacha, Gouverneur-Général de Bitlis, contre le Prélat Nersès Carakhanian, Métropolitain de Mouche et Supérieur du Couvent de Sourpe Garabeth, inimitié qui a eu pour point de départ les véhémentes protestations de ce dignitaire ecclésiastique contre les déprédations des Kurdes et les vexations des fonctionnaires du Gouvernement, a, de nouveau, mis en évidence le caractère cupide de ces Archimandrites qui ont fait cause commune avec le Gouverneur-Général, et réussi, ainsi, après l'arrestation du dit Prélat, à faire emprisonner les quatre membres de la congrégation, délégués à la gestion des intérêts pécuniaires du couvent, ainsi que les diacres Haroutioun et Moysès, en les accusant de crimes politiques. à éloigner de ses fonctions, par des menaces, le Supérieur *ad interim*, l'Archimandrite Tatliéoss, et grâce à cette dislocation de l'organisation administrative de la congrégation, avoir la libre jouissance de tous les biens du monastère, pour les employer à leurs plaisirs, jouissance qui a été l'unique mobile de toute leur conduite dès l'origine de l'affaire.

Dans ces conditions, tout espoir de les voir changer de conduite étant *à priori* perdu, il est naturel que l'ancienne décision de l'autorité ecclésiastique, relative à les dépouiller de leur sacerdoce, reprenne toute sa force et soit mise en vigueur à la première occasion que la chose pourra matériellement se faire.

Pour ce qui concerne le prêtre Der-Parsegh, sur une décision de la Sublime Porte, ce prêtre a été appelé à Constantinople par le Patriarcat pour être jugé du chef des diverses accusations formulées à son égard. Il a été, de même, accusé d'avoir escroqué, à Constantinople, les biens d'une dame Arménienne nommé Elmass, et un avis de comparution lancé par le Procureur-Général du Tribunal Correctionnel de Péra; mais Der-Parsegh avait réussi de quitter la capitale, pour s'esquiver de jugement. S'étant rendu à Mouche, il y a changé de confession. Les pièces relatives à ce procès doivent naturellement être gardées dans les archives du Tribunal Correctionnel de Péra, où il est possible de les voir.

Ces renseignements sont assez éloquents pour qu'il soit inutile de qualifier autrement les dépositions de ces trois personnes, dépositions qu'on tâche d'entourer à dessein d'un bruit exagéré.

No. 49.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 15.)

(No. 217.) *Constantinople, April* 10, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General, inclosing a list of Armenians detained in the prisons of Smyrna, Adana, and Payas.

I have, &c.

(For Sir Philip Currie),

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure in No. 49.

Consul-General Holmwood to Sir P. Currie.

Smyrna, April 2, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 14th March, inclosing list of Armenians reported to be detained in the prisons of Smyrna, Adana, and Payas.

The two latter towns being beyond my Consular district, I have forwarded the lists referring to them to our Consul at Aleppo, together with a copy of your Excellency's instructions.

The report herewith annexed will furnish all information that I can obtain regarding the four Armenians imprisoned at Smyrna, who are mentioned in the list transmitted by your Excellency, and it is supplemented by a brief account of all other imprisonments of Armenians within the vilayet during the past eighteen months, so far as I have been able to ascertain the facts.

The details, which have been obtained from reliable sources, show that the Armenian population of the Vilayet of Aidin and elsewhere has, since the accession of the present Sultan, been subjected to a steadily increasing persecution which now goes to such lengths that no Armenian, whatever be his standing or respectability, is safe from arbitrary arrest. No Armenian, moreover, is allowed to leave the country without a guarantee of his return, which even, owing to the vexatious interference of the police, often proves insufficient to insure his liberty of action.

Under the most frivolous pretexts the police pay domiciliary visits to Armenian houses, and any one who is discovered to possess native literature, such as books of national poetry, atlases in which the Armenian provinces are indicated, or even photographs of Armenians of prominence, is forthwith imprisoned. Such prisoners have of late numbered about twenty, the greater portion of whom have been released after a term averaging from three to six months' detention, without previous trial or preliminary inquiry of any kind.

The Armenians of this vilayet, however, are for the most part essentially traders, thoroughly industrious persons, who take little interest in anything beyond their daily work, and except in isolated cases, the high-handed proceedings of the authorities, which are only taken in fulfilment of orders received from Constantinople, must practically be considered rather as vexatious and humiliating than as being of a really grave nature.

I have, &c.

(Signed) F. HOLMWOOD.

No. 50.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 15.)

(No. 218.) *Pera, April* 10, 1895.

My Lord,

ACCORDING to the desire expressed in your Lordship's despatch No. 118 of the 18th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of Mr. Longworth's despatch of the 12th February, 1894, inclosing a letter from Dr. Jewett relative to certain Armenians of Durlahissar imprisoned at Sivas.

I have, &c.

(For Sir Philip Currie),

(Signed) MICHAEL H. HERBERT.

Inclosure 1 in No. 50.

Consul Longworth to Sir A. Nicolson.

Trebizond, February 12, 1894.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to annex herewith extracts from a letter from Dr. Jewett, reporting on the prevalent fear of massacres, and on the unjust condemnations of certain Armenian political prisoners at Sivas.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 50.

Dr. Jewett to Consul Longworth.

Sivas, February 3, 1894.

(Extract.)

THERE is a rumour about town which, if true, is of some importance. It is said that certain Turks, Notables of the city, have been plotting an attack upon Christians, instigating a massacre in this city.

I would not regard this matter as worth reporting if different reports did not tend to indicate that there is some basis of truth in the rumour.

The plotters, whose names have been given to me, are well known to be fanatical and unprincipled men.

Yesterday there was an unusual number of police and soldiers on the street. An old Turk, who is said to be more or less in the movement, remarked to an Armenian, "You want to create trouble, get the Turks to kill a few of the Giaours, and get the foreign Powers to interfere. We learned better from the Bulgarian affairs. Then the Turks got the worst of it through foreign interference. Now through the Courts we will crush you one by one." It is said that a man, not a Notable, reported to the Vali that a plot to massacre the Christians was brewing or being brewed in the old Turkish quarter of the city.

I hear in a very direct and reliable way that a few days ago the Vali said in an angry tone to another official, "I will outrage the mothers of these Giaours, or they will outrage mine," which, I am told, signifies in Turkish, "I will crush and ruin these infidels, or be ruined by them." Such talk from the Governor is calculated to create trouble. There is already a strong feeling of bitterness between Turks and Christians, and a general feeling of insecurity. The rumour of an intended massacre may be entirely fictitious. I give you all the evidence I have been able to collect up to the present date. The discovery of a similar plot at Cesarea is said to be a fact.

I reported last week that a disturbance arose in an Armenian village near here—Durlahissar; that one of the villagers reported that there was a Revolutionary Committee there, and that the Vali sent sixty zaptiehs there. It is said that the zaptiehs found 300 grammes of powder, several flint-lock antique guns, and a seal in four pieces, which, I am told, is a common form of church seal. They brought to Sivas a number of prisoners (fourteen to twenty, according to different reports),

including two priests. It is said that the priests were severely beaten, and that they and others were put in chains.

The trial of the Amassia prisoners will probably begin on the 6th. Up to yesterday the friends had not been able to secure copies of the indictment papers.

The conduct of the High Criminal Judge and Court is reported by the Armenians to be exceedingly severe and unjust. On evidence amounting to scarcely more than a vague suspicion, political suspects are condemned and given the maximum of sentence with little or no chance of defence. As examples, they report that a young Armenian who had two lines of a proscribed hymn in his possession was sentenced to five years' imprisonment. Four men were travelling along the road, and one of them went into the woods by the roadside to move his bowels. Coming out of the woods he was met by a zaptieh, who demanded what he was doing in the woods. The zaptieh was not satisfied with the answer, searched the man, and found he carried a pistol.

The four men were arrested, brought to Sivas, and sentenced to five years' imprisonment on no other evidence. While here one of the prisoners had his clothes washed by a friend. The friend sent the clean clothes to the prison. He was arrested as an accomplice (in what, I wonder?), and was sentenced to three years' imprisonment.

It is said truthfully, I think, that this severity of the Court is dictated by the Vali. Whether the severity of the Vali is dictated by superior authorities, or is due to his animosity towards Armenians, or to his fear of revolutionists, or to a plan to create disturbances in Asia Minor that in the event of war the Albanians may profit by these troubles, I do not pretend to guess.

No. 51.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 15, 1895, 11·30 P.M.*

THE Armenian Patriarch has informed me that in consequence of the sudden death of the Kaimakam of Adzbeder, many persons have been arrested at Shabin Karahissar, and twelve condemned to death.

Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, in reply to the inquiry which I in consequence telegraphed to him, states that Dr. Jewett considers the report to be substantially correct.

I have also caused inquiries to be made of the Turkish Government.

No. 52.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 132.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 15, 1895, 7·30 P.M.*

ON Saturday the Armenian Patriarch sent me a message that he had received information that thirteen Armenian ecclesiastics who were detained at the Ministry of Justice be handed over to him provided he would accept the conditions given in my telegram to your Lordship No. 122 of the 3rd instant. This the Patriarch was unwilling to do, and accordingly asked me to make urgent representations to the Grand Vizier for the liberation of the prisoners, as it was Easter Eve, so that they might be able to pass the Easter festival in liberty. The Grand Vizier resisted my request for some time, but at length gave way, and on the Patriarch making himself personally responsible for them until the question of the required guarantees was settled, the thirteen Armenians, comprising two Bishops, four Archimandrites, and seven priests, together with a Protestant pastor, were taken to the Patriarchate, and left there.

No. 53.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 15.)

(No. 133.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 15, 1895, 7·45 P.M.*

REPORTS having reached me that arms were being purchased with funds raised by Armenians ostensibly for the relief of the sufferers in the Sassoon events, and that plans were being made for a rising in May, I sent Mr. Eliot to-day to the Armenian Patriarch with instructions to ask if he knew anything in confirmation of this information, and to point out to his Beatitude the fatal consequences to the prospects of reform if the Turks were given just grounds for an armed intervention.

The Patriarch replied that the oppression of the Turks was growing daily worse; that the Armenians in Turkish territory were unable to take any action, but that it was not surprising if their co-religionists in Russia took desperate steps on their behalf.

He, however, professed ignorance of all the schemes referred to, except of the fact that money for the relief of the Sassoon sufferers was being collected in Russian territory. He promised to use his influence in every way he could to prevent any such schemes being made.

I have instructed Consular officers at Moush, Van, and Erzeroum to inquire privately as to reports above mentioned.

A letter just received from Mr. Graves confirms the statement of the Patriarch that the local authorities are growing more and more oppressive.

No. 54.

Memorandum communicated by Morel Bey, April 16, 1895.

LA Sublime Porte a été informée que l'Association Anglo-Arménienne, qui a fait venir à Londres trois Arméniens, qui sont représentés comme originaires de Sassoun, aurait l'intention d'exhiber ces individus dans des meetings qui seraient tenus sous les auspices de cette Association.

Rustem Pacha a été chargé de demander au Comte de Kimberley de vouloir bien prendre les mesures qu'il jugerait opportunes dans le but d'empêcher une exhibition d'un caractère aussi inconvenant.

No. 55.

Memorandum communicated by Morel Bey, April 16, 1895.

DEUX correspondants de journaux Anglais, MM. Dillon et Scudamore, se trouvent depuis quelque temps à Erzeroum, d'où ils adressent aux journaux, comme étant écrites de Mouch, des lettres remplies de nouvelles controuvées, qui sont puisées uniquement à des sources Arméniennes, et portent l'empreinte de l'hostilité la plus vive envers l'Empire Ottoman.

Ces correspondants, en agissant de la sorte, au moment même où la Commission d'Enquête est en train d'accomplir sa tâche, excitent l'esprit public contre la Turquie, et contribuent à créer un état d'opinion qui est fort à regretter.

La Sublime Porte a demandé à l'Ambassade d'Angleterre à Constantinople d'éloigner ces correspondants, mais Sir Philip Currie a répondu qu'il ne pouvait prendre aucune disposition à ce propos.

Rustem Pacha a, en conséquence, été chargé de représenter au Comte de Kimberley les grands inconvénients qu'entraîne la présence des correspondants en question à Erzeroum, et de lui demander d'envoyer à l'Ambassade d'Angleterre les instructions nécessaires pour qu'elle puisse les éloigner.

No. 56.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 134.) *Constantinople, April 17, 1895, noon.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

I HAVE received the following telegram from Mr. Shipley:—

"With reference to your Excellency's telegram of the 13th instant, the account of the massacre of the prisoners at the camp, and of the soldiers outraging the women, has in nearly every detail been confirmed by the testimony of the three women mentioned by Tavo, whose testimony we have at length secured. These women, although not eye-witnesses of the massacre, subsequently saw the pit full of corpses.

"According to the deposition of a shepherd from Semal, he saw the bodies only some six or seven days after the soldiers had left the camp. Although the Commissioners have so far made no official communication to us in regard to these and other statements of the Armenians, they appear disposed to think that no credence can be attached to them. We have been chiefly occupied during the past fortnight in taking the evidence of Kurds, and this has been for the most part merely a repetition of the stock charges against the Armenians of revolt and the committing of atrocities.

"It is impossible to say when the labours of the Commission are likely to terminate, as there are more Kurds to be examined, as well as the witnesses proposed by us.

"Nothing has apparently been done with regard to the long list of losses which various Armenian witnesses have stated to have taken place in their own families, beyond the production of several persons whom an Armenian woman recently alleged, in a manifestly exaggerated statement, to have been killed before her eyes."

No. 57.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 17.)

(No. 136.) *Constantinople, April 17, 1895, 3·45 p.m.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

I HAVE received the following Confidential telegram from Mr. Shipley in reply to my inquiries referred to in my telegram to your Lordship No. 133 of the 15th April:—

"As our movements are very closely watched, the information desired by your Excellency will be somewhat difficult to obtain.

"Beyond the contingency that unscrupulous persons profiting by the existing tension of feeling may, by provoking disturbances, create a panic among the Christians which might lead to serious consequences, I do not think that an attempt at a rising is likely to be made in this district, as the Christians seem to be thoroughly terrorized by the events of last year.

"All my information from Bitlis points to the same conclusion."

No. 58.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 34.) *Foreign Office, April 17, 1895.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 134 of to-day, repeating one from Mr. Shipley relative to the proceedings of the Commission at Moush.

I should wish to have your opinion whether it would not be advisable that something should be done to prevent the Commission from spending an indefinite amount of time in taking immaterial evidence.

It would seem quite possible that the traces of the massacres might be altogether removed by the time the Commission gets to the spot.

I consider that the Delegates might be encouraged to make any proposal which they think desirable in order to avoid these results, and that your Excellency and your French and Russian colleagues should give such proposal your support.

No. 59.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 150.) *Foreign Office, April 17, 1895.*

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 202 of the 3rd instant, inclosing one from Her Majesty's Consul at Angora relative to the plundering of the Armenian village of Topaz by a Turkish mob.

It would be desirable that you should call the attention of the Porte to the alleged torture of Donik Effendi Zadikian by the Turkish authorities.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 60.

Anglo-Armenian Association to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 18.)

3, Essex Court, Temple, London, April 11, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour, by direction of the Council of the Anglo-Armenian Association, to transmit herewith the original sworn depositions of the three Armenian refugees, Khamo Movsesian, Altoon (his wife), and Ovig Vartanian,* who recently escaped from the massacre of the Christian inhabitants of the Sassoon district by Turkish troops, regulars and irregulars.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD ATKIN,
Honorary Secretary.

Inclosure 1 in No. 60.

Deposition of Khamo Movsesian.

THE deposition of Khamo Movsesian, of the village of Ghelié-Guzan, in the district of Sassoon, Armenia, small farmer, taken before me, Edward Albert Bell, a Commissioner for Oaths, at 6, Idol Lane, in the City of London, on the 11th day of April, 1895.

After having the oath interpreted to him by the Rev. Frederick Davis Greene (the interpreter duly sworn), and having been solemnly sworn upon a manuscript copy of the Bible written in the ancient Armenian language, who saith:—

Without going back to the troubles we endured the year before the great massacre, I will begin with the massacre itself.

Throughout the winter we had been greatly alarmed by reports from everyone we saw, Kurds, Armenians, and Turks, that extensive preparations were being made by both the Government and the Kurds for a general attack on Sassoon, and we thus understood that serious evil was planned for us. When the spring came and the grass was green, in the time of rhubarb, the regular Turkish soldiers came to collect the sheep tax. Having collected the tax from the villages of Shenik, Semal, and Alliantz, they came to us at Ghelié-Guzan. We paid the tax, and they went off.

About two weeks later Kurds came from Khirzan under Hassa Agha, their Chief, numbering about fifty or sixty. They came to Ghelié-Guzan and demanded sheep, butter, beds, and other of our belongings, which we gave them in fear, and they went off.

A few days after the Khirzantzi Kurds left the Khiantzi Kurds came, and we also had to give to them in the same way.

Then came the Bakrantzi and Badkantzi Kurds making the same demands, which we refused on the grounds that we could give no more. A fight occurred between us and these latter Kurds, but they went off before anybody was killed on either side. They continued to annoy us by plundering isolated flocks, and preventing our going about the country.

On leaving us these same Kurds proceeded to the villages of Semal and Shenik

* These names are communicated confidentially.

and made similar demands, and plundered them by force. Large numbers of Kurds now collected with their black tents on Sev Sar (the mountain between Moush and Shenik).

They attacked the sheepfolds of Semal, and carried off about 1,000 sheep belonging to the three families of Mardo, Galbo, and Bulbul, rich men of that place.

One man, Donch, of Semal, was killed.

The Semal and Shenik villagers at once went after their sheep, and recovered them after a fight with these Kurds, in which Sako, of Semal, and Djevuch, of Shenik, were killed. Three of the Kurds were killed also, and their companions took their bodies to Talib Effendi (the Binbashi), who was in command of the camp of regular Turkish soldiers at Mergemozan, a spot close by Shenik.

Talib Effendi said, "Take these bodies to the Government at Moush."

Within three days about 500 soldiers under command of Hadji Taib came from Moush, the Kurds meanwhile having made an attack on Ghelié-Gumuman, a village within half-an-hour of the Turkish camp, whose inhabitants fled to the village of Alliantz.

After the arrival of Hadji Taib, Omer Agha and Shakir Agha, Kurd Chieftains, with soldiers and Kurds, came to Semal, and sent out word also to Shenik, Ghelié-Guzan, and other villages demanding 10 Turkish liras from each village. The villagers knew that this was a pretext for a quarrel, but replied, nevertheless, "We have no money; take anything else—sheep, beds, or oxen," but the Chiefs insisted on money, which we could not give them.

The villages of Semal and Shenik were then attacked and captured by Kurdish Hamidiehs (enrolled troops) under their Chiefs. This fight took place some days after the festival of Vartavar (about the first week in August), and lasted several hours. Some of the villagers were armed with flint-locks. The ordinary Kurds were armed in the same way, but the Hamidiehs were armed with regular breech-loading rifles.

News of the battle was brought to us at Ghelié-Guzan, two hours' distant, and the next morning about 250 of us went to the help of our friends, I being among them. On arriving we made a united attack and drove off the Kurds, recovering the two villages. Several Kurds were killed, and of the Armenians six men and one woman, who was bringing powder to us. She was Joreh, the wife of Gourjo, of Shenik. The Kurds tied her, put part of the gunpowder in her clothes, and piling on brushwood set her on fire. I saw the corpse all blackened, and only half the size of the woman.

That night it was decided to abandon Semal and Shenik, and all the Armenians retreated with their sheep, cattle, and such goods as they could carry to Ghelié-Guzan. As they retreated during the night the whole region was lighted up by the blaze of their villages, which the Kurds had immediately set on fire.

All this time soldiers were continually arriving, and were massed at camp Mergemozan. The Kurds also increased from all sides day by day. The latter next attacked Alliantz, the inhabitants of which defended themselves with the help of villagers from several places, I being among them. At that time my two nephews were wounded, and about five Armenians were killed. The following night Alliantz also was abandoned, and now all gathered in Ghelié-Guzan, which became excessively crowded, so that the streets as well as the houses were packed.

The Kurds having attacked us here for three days in vain, went, we were informed, to the Turkish camp at Mergemozan, and said that the fighting had gone far enough; it was a pity to kill more, and that at any rate they would not carry on the fight alone any longer; either the soldiers must help them or they would go home. Some regular soldiers were then dressed in Kurdish costume to join in the fight. This news was brought to us by friendly Armenians of Shaddakh, who were compelled to serve in the Turkish camp. They told us that a determined battle might be expected the next day.

Thereupon the Armenians decided to send all their women and children and animals to the top of Mount Andok for safety, a very steep mountain, which is just behind the village of Ghelié-Guzan. All of us who could fight were divided into three parties, one to defend the village, the other to defend the approach to the mountain, and the third to defend Mergir, a place between the other two. These three points were threatened by divisions of the Kurds. The first attack was made on Ghelié-Guzan, and repulsed with small loss on each side; but the attacking party, after rejoining the main force, which was encamped on a hill called Avdal-Agzlootz near by,

returned in greater force, and made another attack the same afternoon at the foot of Mount Andok. Here the battle became hotter and hotter, so that we could hardly hear or see anything, and many Kurds were killed, among whom I found half-a-dozen bodies of Turkish soldiers with a Kurdish outer garment over them. The higher position of the Armenians who hid among the rocks was so good that few of them were killed. Agop, my brother-in-law, was wounded.

For about a week fighting practically ceased while cannon were being put in position, and the region was completely invested. During these days Khashman Agha, a friendly Kurd, came and told us that all the Kurds together with the Hamidiehs and the Turkish regular soldiers were preparing to join in a united attack in which no quarter would be given—man, woman, or child—and that we had better save ourselves as best we could.

We saw the whole region was covered with Turkish troops and Kurds. We had never seen so many men together; it seemed as if all the soldiers in the world had come to fight us.

About 260 of us, together with forty women, realizing that our end had come, decided to make a final stand in Ghelié-Guzan, defend it as long as we could, and flee when all hope was gone. In these fights that had taken place up to this time the younger women had been with us taking care of the wounded, getting us water and food, loading guns, and urging us not to flee. A large number of regular soldiers, together with Kurds, now attacked us. The village is divided by a stream. They captured one side and burnt it. We defended the other until nightfall, when all our powder was exhausted, and then we fled in the night and joined the main body of Armenians all gathered on Mount Andok.

A Council was hurriedly held, and all hope being at an end, it being clear that to remain was sure death, it was decided to scatter at once in different directions, each one to save himself. The flight immediately began. The Shenik people fled mostly in the direction of Passur, in the district of Khoolp, the Alliantz people towards Unguznag (Khiank), and the Ghelié-Guzan and Semal people took refuge in the dense forest of Chorud, opposite Dalvorig. My wife, parents, and all our family of twenty-three souls went with this party. I think more of the Shenik people escaped than any others, because they did not try to take their flocks; we tried to save ours, and could not go so fast.

The next morning, when the soldiers and Kurds found that we were fleeing, they gave chase and butchered every one they overtook. The Kurds gave their attention principally to securing the plunder of flocks and herds, but the regular soldiers, who bothered themselves only with objects of special value and money, made a business of exterminating. The only quarter given, as far as we heard, was in the case of young and beautiful women, who were kept for vile purposes by the soldiers, or carried off by the Kurds. I saw five women who escaped from Turkish soldiers after having been detained in their camp and abused by them for many days. The women were very weak, and two of them soon died, the other three escaping to Moush Plain. For about four weeks the soldiers continued to search through the mountains and valleys for those who were trying to escape or hide. It was hard to find them on account of the rocky nature of the region, much of which was covered with underbrush. Among the many incidents of special cruelty I know of, sixty young women who were caught on Mount Andok, brought into the village of Ghelié-Guzan, confined in the church for several days, during which they were outraged by the soldiers until they either died from the treatment or were killed outright. The fact of their being outraged was freely reported by Kurds, who were present, and also by Armenians of the Shaddakh region, who through all the conflict had not been involved, but were continually serving the soldiers in bringing forage and food, for which purpose they had been impressed.

I myself, about a month after the general massacre began, returned to Ghelié-Guzan, the troops having withdrawn. I found the church door broken, the altar torn down, and the bodies of the women still lying in and about the church. I also saw three pits that had been dug in a field of millet belonging to Beddo, the Headman of the village. One of these pits was filled with dead bodies, among which I hunted for that of Arreh, who was my wife's cousin. We knew that although his clothes were poor, he had been intrusted with 30 liras to conceal. After removing about fifteen bodies I found that of Arreh, and recovered the money. The stench was so horrible that I had to tie up my nose and mouth whilst doing this. I did not reach the bottom of the pit, but by looking between the bodies I saw that it was at least deeper than a tall man could reach; there was only a few inches of dirt thrown over the

bodies. These were the bodies, I learnt, of men who had come in of themselves or were decoyed into the village on promise of their lives being spared, but who were killed by the bayonet and thrown into the pit. Priest Hohannes, of Semal, who had persuaded many to return, was himself horribly mutilated. I saw his body; he was in the prime of life, and had a long black beard. The two other pits had been prepared in the expectation of a larger number of victims, but the villagers, learning the situation, refused to come in.

Throughout the whole region bodies of those who had been killed were to be found. In some cases they were cut up, in others, thrown into a handy ditch or a stream, and, if in the brushwood, burnt up. But many, also, were simply left to rot away. When lying in a dry place exposed to the sun the corpses turned black and shrivelled up in the dry hot air, but where they were on damp earth, or piled together, they had very much decomposed.

With my own eyes I saw from my place of hiding two women who were caught as they fled by half-a-dozen regular soldiers in uniform. In spite of the supplications and screams of the women, which I heard, both of them were cut to pieces by these soldiers. One of the women being with child was ripped open, as I saw on descending after the soldiers had departed. Besides this case, I came across as many as ten bodies of other pregnant women who had been treated in the same way.

After wandering amongst the rocks and brushwood for two weeks, dodging the soldiers, who were looking everywhere, I happened to find my brother Bedros, 30 years old, and we kept together from that time on. We returned stealthily to the place where our relatives had last been seen, and after searching we found and buried the bodies of my father, mother, eldest brother and his two sons, aged 8 and 10, two aunts, an uncle, two cousins, and the hands of a babe, which I afterwards learned were those of my own child.

Having heard that it was reported by the Kurds that Shakkeh, who was the sister-in-law of Krikor, the Headman of Shenik, and very well known for her wealth and courage, had, in despair, thrown herself down a certain precipice, I went with two friends, Khazar and Krikor, now in Alexandripole, and found there the shapeless body of Shakkeh, her little boy, and other women. Shakkeh had fine clothes on, but being soiled with blood they had been left untouched; she was lying just as she fell, on a flat rock, on which her blood had run for some distance; her body was black and dry. We buried them there, in remembrance of the hospitality we had so often enjoyed in her house.

I could give many other incidents which I saw with my own eyes.

I am 26 years old, have been married to my wife, named Altoon, for four years, and our only child was killed. I am now staying at 48, Doughty Street, London.

(Signature follows.)

Sworn before me, the day and year first above-mentioned, at 6, Idol Lane, aforesaid.

(Signed) E. A. Bell,
A Commissioner to administer Oaths in the Supreme Court of Judicature.

Inclosure 2 in No. 60.

Deposition of Altoon, Wife of Khamo.

THE deposition of Altoon, of the village of Ghelié-Guzan (Sassoon), wife of Khamo, taken before me, Edward Albert Bell, a Commissioner for Oaths, at 6, Idol Lane, in the City of London, on the 11th day of April, in the year of our Lord 1895.

After having the oath interpreted to her by the Rev. Frederick Davis Greene, the interpreter duly sworn, and having been solemnly sworn upon a manuscript copy of the Bible in the ancient Armenian language, who saith:—

I, Altoon, wife of Khamo Movsesian, of the village of Ghelié-Guzan, do testify that when, after taking refuge in the forest of Chorud, we were overtaken, I tried to escape with three other women, two being aunts of my husband. But there was no time. We hastily hid ourselves among some thick bushes, where we were soon discovered by a band of four Kurds and three soldiers. We begged and implored for

mercy, but they knocked us down with their guns, and killed my three companions with swords and daggers. Then a Turkish soldier snatched from my arms my 3 months old babe, a boy, and, in spite of my tears and pleadings, threw him against a rock, then pierced him with his fixed bayonet, and threw him up in the air. Another soldier took the child up by the foot, and cut him into pieces. They then all fell on me, swearing, and knocked me down. One of the Kurds, finding me young, decided to take me with him, but I refused to follow and become a Mahommedan. They threatened, and finally decided to kill me. As I was dressed in good clothes, they stripped me, so as not to soil my clothes with blood. In doing so, they discovered the gold coins in my headdress, and about 30 Turkish liras in my belt, and immediately began to fight amongst themselves. Taking advantage of this opportunity, I flew away through the dense brushwood. They fired after me several times, but missed me. I hid, and remained there all day, all night, and all the next day, trembling, hungry, and cold, and was several times almost discovered by other parties of soldiers who were searching.

During the third night I ventured out, and put on some clothes which I got from the dead bodies of some women. I wandered about the forest until I met an Armenian named Kaleh, and after several narrow escapes, travelling during the night and hiding during the day, we managed to reach Khunoos, where a kind Armenian hid and kept me. About twenty days later my husband, Khamo, while passing through Khunoos, came and found me by chance. We then secretly were helped on our way, travelling at night, until we reached the Russian frontier, and at last got to Tiflis by way of Kars.

(Signature follows.)

Sworn before me, the day and year first above mentioned, at 6, Idol Lane, aforesaid.

(Signed) E. A. Bell,
A Commissioner to administer Oaths in the Supreme Court of Judicature.

Inclosure 3 in No. 60.

Deposition of Ovig Vartanian.

THE deposition of Ovig Vartanian, of Dalvorig (Sassoon), taken before me, Edward Albert Bell, a Commissioner for Oaths, at 6, Idol Lane, City of London, on the 11th day of April, in the year of our Lord 1895.

After having the oath interpreted to him by the Rev. Frederick Davis Greene (the interpreter duly sworn), and having been solemnly sworn upon a manuscript copy of the Bible written in the ancient Armenian language, who saith:—

I, Ovig Vartanian, of the village of Dalvorig (Sassoon), declare that the day after the burning of Ghelié-Guzan, the Belektzi and Bozuktzi Kurds came on Dalvorig. For two days we defended our homes; they finally retired, but not without carrying away with them about 1,000 sheep. We lost nine men and four women.

A few days later several tribes of Kurds came on us in great numbers; they seemed about 4,000 in the morning and about 8,000 in the afternoon. We resisted them from behind rocks as best we could, losing 14 men, 7 women, and 4 children, but towards evening two immense armies of regular soldiers with cannon came on us—one from Ghelié-Guzan and the other (under Osman Pasha) from the Caza of Khiank.

They were so numerous that the hills were black with them, and the noise of their trumpets was so loud that it almost drowned the noise of our guns. Finding that our retreat was being cut off we fled for our lives. I took part in these struggles, and it was then that my old father, two cousins, and an aunt were killed.

A frightful massacre followed. I and my brother Boghos took refuge on the heights of Shidag-Sar, several hours' distant, where we hid ourselves about two weeks, during which time the soldiers and Kurds sacked and destroyed our village completely, and then retired towards Andok, hunting us down continually. The Kurds mostly went off as soon as they got the animals and plunder.

My brother and I then returned stealthily and buried the mutilated bodies of our father, two cousins, and aunt; the ground was covered with the bodies of our people, naked, and horribly mutilated. Amongst them I saw two women who had been cut

open, and whose babies were protruding from their wombs. Many had their nose, ears, hands, or head cut off. After many escapes I finally reached Havadorig (near Moush), where a British Consul or some other European tried to talk with me, but I was driven away by a soldier. From Havadorig I at last got to Kars and Tiflis.

I will tell of what took place in the year before the great massacre. Seven Ashirets, or tribes, namely, the Kurds of Oosvedoon, Bozuktsi, Khanavdali, Balaktzi, Khiantzi, Bakrantzi, and Badkantzi came in succession, and made exactions from the village of Dalvorig. We gave to the first five and refused the last two tribes, who, however, took by force a large number of animals from Dalvorig, Purkh, and Hortkh.

The last two tribes came together, collecting for several days, the former under Omer Agha and the latter under Shakir Agha, with a great number of men. When we at first refused them a conflict took place in our village, in which six men and one woman, Khate, wife of Sarkis, brother of the Headman, were killed. Several Kurds were killed also. Help was sent to us by the villagers of Ghelié-Guzan, twenty men, and from Shenik and Senal, fifteen, but they arrived too late and turned back. Several days after this fight regular soldiers came down from Moush, and, tying their horses in our growing crops, destroyed them. The Governor was with them. Two days after the Governor and these soldiers went back, Malek Effendi came up from Khizan to collect taxes. He was the son-in-law of Osman Pasha, of Diarbekir. We told Malek Effendi that the Kurds had plundered us, and we could not pay taxes. Malek Effendi offered to go to the Kurds and try to get back some of the animals, and took Boghos, Khevo, and Ghazar, prominent men, with him to identify the cattle. On reaching the Kurds, the latter refused to give up any animals, telling Malek Effendi that they had been authorized to make the attack, and that the booty had been promised to them. They had a written order to prove this.

Malek Effendi insisted that they should give back some, and succeeded in obtaining about thirty mules, some oxen, and sheep, but instead of returning the animals to Dalvorig he carried them off in the direction of Diarbekir, together with Boghos, Khevo, and Ghazar, whom we never saw again.

Thereupon three of our chief men, Gaspar, Donin, and Khevo, went north to the Governor, whom they found at Senal, and made complaint of what Malek Effendi had done, but the Governor would not listen to them, saying that Dalvorig belonged to the Vilayet of Diarbekir, and was not under his jurisdiction.

(Signature follows.)

Sworn before me, the day and year first above mentioned, at 6, Idol Lane, aforesaid.

(Signed) E. A. Bell,
A Commissioner to administer Oaths in the Supreme Court of Judicature.

Inclosure 4 in No. 60.

Affidavit of the Rev. F. D. Greene.

I, FREDERICK DAVIS GREENE, of Andover, Massachusetts, United States of America, clergyman, make oath, and say as follows:—

1. I am now residing at 18, Southampton Street, High Holborn, in the City of London.

2. I have recently returned from Van, Armenia, after a residence of three and a-half years there, during which I travelled through the country, visiting among other places Bitlis and Moosh. I am familiar with the Armenian language, and solemnly swear that the statements embodied in the depositions of Khanno Movsesian, his wife Altoon, and Ovig Varkanian, all of Sassoon, in Armenia, have been well and truly translated by me without addition or alteration, and to the best of my ability.

(Signed) FREDERICK D. GREENE.

Sworn at 6, Idol Lane, in the City of London, this 11th day of April, 1895.

Before me,
(Signed) E. A. Bell,
A Commissioner for Oaths.

No. 61.

*The Earl of Kimberley to Sir M. Durand.**

(No. 11.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April* 18, 1895.

A REPORT has reached Her Majesty's Government from a secret source that funds are being collected by Armenians in Russia and Persia, ostensibly for the relief of the sufferers from the Sassoon massacres, but, in reality, for the purpose of preparing for an Armenian rising in May, and that with the same object arms are being purchased and smuggled into Turkey.

I shall be glad if you will report without delay if you notice anything which tends to confirm these rumours.

No. 62.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 157 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 18, 1895.

MOREL BEY, the Secretary of the Turkish Embassy, called at the Foreign Office on the 16th instant, and communicated on behalf of the Ambassador, who was confined to his house by illness, the two Memoranda of which copies are inclosed.†

The first states that Rustem Pasha has been instructed to request that the Anglo-Armenian Association may be prevented from producing at their meetings three Armenians who have been brought to London and are represented to be natives of Sassoon.

The second Memorandum states that the Ambassador has been instructed to ask that Messrs. Dillon and Scudamore may be made to leave Erzeroum.

In a private note which has been sent to Morel Bey to-day, he has been requested to express to Rustem Pasha my regret that I cannot do anything to meet his Excellency's wishes in the matters referred to in the Memoranda.

As regards the first, the note points out that the Armenians who have arrived in England are perfectly free agents, and are at liberty to attend any meetings they please.

With reference to the second Memorandum, the note states that I cannot undertake to override your Excellency's action in regard to Messrs. Dillon and Scudamore, and that you have informed the Sublime Porte and reported to me that you see no sufficient ground for any action on your part for the removal of these gentlemen from Erzeroum.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 63.

Mr. G. Hagopian to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 19.)

My Lord, 25, *Chesilton Road, Fulham, London, April* 17, 1895.

IT is now exactly five months ago since I had the honour of submitting to your Lordship my Memorial of the 15th November, inclosing a copy of a letter which reached me from Bitlis, dated the 9th October. All the evidence and details which have been collected since from various sources, and published in the "Times" and other leading organs of the British press, have converged in proving that the contents of that letter from Armenia were indisputably correct, and that the position I took up in that Memorial, not to mention previous Memorials and Addresses to the Foreign Office, demanding on behalf of my countrymen the abolition of the existing system of administration and the establishment of a new régime in Armenia, approved by Great Britain and the other Signatory Powers, and worked under their immediate supervision,

* Also to Consul Stevens. † Nos. 64 and 65.

was perfectly justified, and, in fact, is the only means whereby the proper government of the Armenian provinces and the reign of justice and tranquillity could be secured.

The frank and clear statement which your Lordship made to the influential deputation which waited upon you at the Foreign Office on the 29th March suggests a few remarks which I hope your Lordship will kindly take into consideration.

In the first place, we are glad of your Lordship's firmest, warmest, and strongest sympathy with the Armenian people at this hour of their national suffering and sorrow, and further, that, as your Lordship declared at the meeting held at North Walsham on the 13th instant, that sympathy was shared by all your colleagues, and that the subject would be treated with all earnestness, and with a strong and fixed desire to apply some remedy to the grievances under which the Armenians suffered. We have reason to believe that Her Majesty's Government were as much moved and pained when the first news of the deplorable events which had occurred in the Sassoon district reached them as perhaps any of our countrymen, and that any latent optimism as to the value of the past good intentions of the Sultan's Government towards the Armenian people, or the capacity and willingness of the local authorities in Armenia to give effect to such intentions, received a rude, if not a fatal, shock.

In presence of the strenuous denials of the Ottoman Porte that anything untoward had occurred in Armenia, the first steps to be taken being to institute an international, or rather a European, investigation into those events, your Lordship took immediate action to secure such an inquiry. But inasmuch as those occurrences were an isolated part of other events produced by the internal policy pursued for some years past by the Porte, and consisted of the annihilation of the inhabitants of an entire district, accompanied by atrocious acts of cruelty, crime, and murder, if the inquiry for which Her Majesty's Government, in conjunction with the Governments of Russia and France, have obtained the Sultan's fiat should not prove adequate or conclusive as justice would demand, the reason would be that proper guarantees were not immediately taken to secure the attendance and due protection of all the witnesses by the appointment of a European officer of superior rank, of high integrity and ability, to take over the administration of the provinces inhabited by the Armenians for the time being, and the successful opposition of the Turkish bureaucracy to the discovery of the whole and unvarnished truth.

To understand, my Lord, the opposition of the Ottoman Porte to any inquiry or the introduction of any effective and availing reforms, it would be necessary to take into consideration the dual nature of the Sultan's authority. As Padishah or Emperor he enters into Treaties and Conventions with the States of Europe, and grants Firmans of immunity, privileges, and liberties to his non-Mussulman subjects; but, as the Spiritual Head of the Sunni or orthodox Moslems, a dignity which the reigning Sultan is said to derive from Selim I, surnamed the Cruel, A.D. 1512-20, who obtained it from Mutawakel Alu-Allah, the last of the Abassides in Egypt, together with the reliques of the Prophet, by deposing him from his rank, he is, as described in the inclosed Turkish newspaper of a very recent date, namely, the 26th day of Ramadan, corresponding to the 22nd March, 1895:—

"The Holy Caliph of him to whom the Koran came down, as is surnamed the Farong or discerner of things, His august Majesty, whose generosity and benefactions are universal, the Vicar of the Prophet, the wonder-working seat of justice, the Commander of the Faithful, the Imam of the Moslems, the shadow of God on earth, the unique cause of tranquillity for nations and peoples, the sun of suns, the zenith of the Caliphate, the zenith of the great Sultans, the head of Sultans, the leader of Khagans, the eyesight of the Mussulmans, the first Crown of the Ottomans, the pride of Kings, the vivifier of the best conduct, the fame-increasing Crown of Ottoman glory and renown, the warrior of endless holiness, our spontaneously beneficent Emperor, our Lord the benefactor of the world and of its inhabitants: may he adorn the throne of exalted dignity and abundant source of Majesty and honour to the end of ages, and may God grant His Majesty, who is endowed with angelic attributes, and is a special and blessed gift to this country and State (of the Ottoman Empire), many and many happy days and nights, and render him successful. Amen. And this through the intercession of the Lord of Prophets and Apostles (Mahommed)."

Thus the Sultan of Turkey, in his capacity of High Pontiff and Vicar of the Prophet Mahommed, is perforce in the eyes of his co-religionists an individual immeasurably superior to a mere Emperor, the State becomes a theocracy, and all the State officials throughout the Empire become irresponsible instruments in the hands of an irresponsible master. Whatever they do will be as the act of God, and remain without appeal; all other considerations will be as nothing before the dominant idea of

the religious and social supremacy of the ruling race over the lives, property, honour, and creed of the subject nationalities. The Sultan in his character of Sovereign and Ruler of the Ottoman Empire may enter into Treaties and Conventions with foreign Powers for the protection and proper treatment of his own non-Moslem subjects, and even promulgate certain civil laws, but his people who look upon him as their Spiritual Head will know none of these Treaties and Conventions, but will find it to their interest and advantage to be the unrelenting opponents of their fellow-subjects of a different creed and race, and the cries for justice of the latter will pass unheeded. Charitable and compassionate souls like the late Lady Strangford may, as in the last Russo-Turkish war, collect funds in England, provide surgeons and surgical appliances and medicine for the Turkish wounded, but the Hamidiyeh Kurds and the Imperial regular troops will, in complete oblivion of these things, and the customs of civilized warfare, be not only employed to use their artillery and rifles of the most modern type against practically unarmed Armenian Christians, who are economically the mainstay of the Ottoman Empire, but kill them in cold blood when they surrender, and inflict nameless outrages and tortures on defenceless women and tender children, and annihilate by fire and sword the aborigines of a whole classic country side, on the plea of serving their Sovereign and religion, and believing to act on his Iradé or Imperial will and pleasure, and, further, the Governor-General and Marshal in the locality, who will so interpret the Iradé, will be honoured and decorated by the Sovereign Pontiff for their faithful service.

This is the question, I submit, which underlies the Eastern question to which your Lordship referred, and whether it assume a grave or dangerous aspect outside the Ottoman dominions or not, it frequently breaks out in a very acute and terrible form inside wherever Christian entities are agglomerated, as in Armenia, and whenever their enterprise, progressive spirit, and determination to be properly governed raise the envy, cupidity, or ill-founded alarm of the ruling classes.

By way of remedying these intolerable evils, the late Patriarch Nerses, giving expression to the national desire of the Armenians, who, as chief sufferers, have a more thorough and intimate knowledge of their country, and its system of administration, than any outsider could possibly have, advocated during many years a system of decentralization for the provinces inhabited by the Armenians, and the appointment of a single Governor-General of the Armenian nationality under certain guarantees. In spite of his frank and outspoken condemnation of the existing system, his twofold patriotism was fully recognized, if not followed, by the Ottoman Porte, which rendered him extraordinary honours at his obsequies in November 1881.

As one of the difficulties inherent in the Armenian question, which now, in consequence of the recent massacres and outrages, occupies the most prominent place in the Eastern question, your Lordship said that there is no Armenia in the sense of a country which is exclusively inhabited by Armenians, but that side by side with them there is a very large Mussulman population, and in many districts it is in an actual majority. This state of things no doubt offers some difficulties, but I beg to submit to your Lordship, first, that if Armenia had been exclusively inhabited by Armenians they would have been better able to take care of themselves and of their country, and probably would not have had recourse to the Powers, who have from time to time given a new lease of tenure and existence to the Sultans of Turkey by their military and financial aid, among who Great Britain has been the most conspicuous; secondly, that it has been the policy of the Ottoman Porte, for aims and objects other than those intended or approved by the Guaranteeing Powers, to locate a very considerable number of Circassian and other Mussulman immigrants in close proximity to the Armenian peasantry, who were already bitterly complaining of the vexations and oppressions of their older Moslem neighbours, instead of quartering them in more distant parts; and that since the war of 1877-78, and independently of the recent massacres, there has been an artificial increase of the Moslem population, and a sensible decrease in the general security and prosperity of the Armenians, involving a serious loss of population and prestige; thirdly, that the arming of the Kurds, and the punishing of all Armenians who should be found to carry arms for the purpose of self-defence, has given a free vent to all the forces of anarchy and bloodshed; and, fourthly, that immigrant and nomadic tribes have not the same attachment to or settled traditional interests in the country of their forefathers as the Armenians, and that Asiatic Turkey is empty enough and broad enough for the suitable location of these migratory or newly-arrived tribes; nor would their interests suffer thereby, excepting the loss of the opportunities they now have for violating, outraging, and robbing the unarmed and defenceless Christians with the knowledge or direct connivance of the local authorities.

Hence it would not be a difficult matter to follow existing precedents, and in the interests of the Sultan and of the Ottoman Empire itself to establish a system of government and administration suitable both to the aims and imperative needs of the Armenians, and honourable to Great Britain and the other friendly Powers.

But in the establishment of all such systems or régimes it is imperatively necessary that most special and particular care be taken not to allow the religious prerogatives of the Caliph in Turkey to interfere with the civil administration of justice, or be allowed to favour one class to the detriment of another. Indeed, if there be any class of people which now requires to be consoled, comforted, and cheered, it is the Armenian who, in spite of the nauseous moral atmosphere with which it is surrounded, its members have preserved very correct and proper feelings in all moral and ethical matters.

On p. 47 of a pamphlet which we have recently printed on the Armenian question, entitled "The Cry of Armenia," and of which I have the honour of inclosing a copy, the following four conditions are mentioned as likely to prove a permanent remedy for the Armenian provinces, and save them from systematic oppression and intermittent outrages and massacres:—

1. The appointment of a Governor-General for a term of five years, the Powers to have a veto.

2. An International Commission of Supervision.

3. Local control over the collection and assessment of direct taxes.

4. The admission of Christians to militia and police in proportion to their numbers.

I also have the honour of inclosing a summary which I made of the Memorial prepared by the late Patriarch Nerses, and submitted by him through his Delegates to the Berlin Congress in 1878, together with the copy of an earlier appeal to the Great Powers of Europe, sent in October 1876, through the late Mr. Seth A. Apear, President of our then Armenian Committee in London, which I have inserted in a little work entitled "The Armenians and the Eastern Question," and of which I presented early copies to the Earl of Beaconsfield and the Marquis of Salisbury previous to their departure to Berlin. Both of these documents show the intimate knowledge which the leaders of the Armenian people possessed of the internal affairs of Turkey, and of the pressing civil and political wants of the Armenians. Some of the forecasts which were made at the time, and which were not duly taken into consideration then by Great Britain, have unfortunately proved too true.

The indications which your Lordship threw out on the occasion of your speech at the Foreign Office as to the sincere and real co-operation which Her Majesty's Government has received and expects to receive from the other Great Powers have been daily justified, and it is some consolation to us to see that, though late in the day, our confidence that England and the friendly Powers would not be found wanting in their duty to Armenia and the Armenian people has not been misplaced.

I have, &c.
(Signed) G. HAGOPIAN, *Chairman of the Armenian Patriotic Association.*

No. 64.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 19.)

(No. 137.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 19, 1895, 10·45 A.M.

I HAVE telegraphed to Mr. Shipley on the subject of your telegram No. 34 of the 17th April.

No. 65.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 19.)

(No. 138.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 19, 1895, 10·45 A.M.

YOUR Lordship ought to receive on Monday next the plan of reforms for Armenia prepared by my Russian and French colleagues and myself. It was sent

off yesterday to London, Paris, and St. Petersburgh, and in order to facilitate consideration I have had three copies made.

We have agreed not to communicate it to our Austrian, German, and Italian colleagues until it has received the approval of our Governments, and has been presented to the Sultan.

As my colleagues fear the result of intrigues if the scheme is not presented to the Sultan without delay, they are very anxious that approval should be telegraphed as soon as possible.

No. 66.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 158.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 19, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatches Nos. 176 and 210 of the 20th ultimo and 9th instant respectively, inclosing reports from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum relative to an attack made by Turks on Armenians at Tchipod, in the Caza of Ispir.

I request you to bring this outrage to the notice of the Turkish Government. It seems to have happened two months ago, and it may be difficult now to trace and punish the offenders; but it is one which should not be allowed to pass without some attempt at investigation and punishment.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 67.

Evangelical Alliance to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 20.)

My Lord, 7, *Adam Street, Strand, London, April* 19, 1895.

THE Council of the Evangelical Alliance desire me to thank your Lordship for your communication of the 10th instant and to convey the expression of their cordial satisfaction on hearing of the settlement of the difficulties under which the Protestant Christians at Ordu have laboured for so long. We have received from Mr. Dwight, our correspondent at Constantinople, letters giving us details in regard to the recent outbreak, and another letter reporting the satisfactory conclusion arrived at.

The Council warmly appreciate the attention kindly given at the Foreign Office to matters affecting religious liberty in Turkey, and which have been frequently brought under the notice of your Lordship. They also feel grateful to Sir Philip Currie, Her Majesty's Ambassador, for the prompt and energetic action he has taken on several occasions when the rights of the Protestant Christians of Turkey have been infringed.

Recent events have confirmed the Evangelical Alliance in its determination to adhere exclusively to its proper function of appealing only in favour of those who are suffering on account of their religion. But, at the same time, there is amongst the membership of the Alliance throughout the world widespread indignation at the reports which have been published from time to time of the atrocities in Armenia. Our own correspondence from various parts of Turkey confirm, to a certain extent, the published Reports; but we continue to hope that the investigation now taking place will prove that the newspaper accounts of the events have been exaggerated. Still there is great cause for anxiety on behalf the Christian populations of Turkey; and it is a satisfaction to know that the British Government is watching this matter; and that Her Majesty is represented at Constantinople by one who has already in his wise action earned the gratitude of those who have been pleading the cause of the oppressed.

In February last, our Committee at Constantinople supplied Her Majesty's Ambassador there with a Paper giving a list of "Deviations from the Hatti-Humayoun." This statement was prepared at the request of Sir Philip Currie, who wanted specific details in confirmation of the communication addressed by our Council to your Lordship, and which had been forwarded to his Excellency from the Foreign Office. Our Council think it possible that this statement would be of value to some of our foreign

branches, which from time to time make representations to their respective Governments in favour of religious liberty in Turkey. But as the document was prepared specially for the British Ambassador at Constantinople we do not feel free, even in confidence, to send copies to our Committees on the Continent of Europe and in America, without your Lordship's permission. If, however, there is no objection to our taking this course, we should like to furnish copies privately to our Committees, in Berlin, Paris, Washington, and one or two other capitals. Perhaps your Lordship will kindly favour us with your views as to this matter.

Believe me, &c.
(Signed) A. J. ARNOLD,
General Secretary.

No. 68.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 139. Confidential.) *Constantinople, April 20, 1895, 12·5 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

I AM informed that Prince Radolin, on the occasion of his farewell audience with the Sultan, used strong language as to the necessity of introducing reforms into the administration of the Empire, especially as regards the mode in which provincial Governors are appointed.

His Imperial Majesty was much disturbed, as he had never before heard such language from the German Ambassador.

No. 69.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 140. Confidential.) *Constantinople, April 20, 1895, 3·30 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

SINCE I sent my telegram to your Lordship No. 139 of the 20th April, I have had authentic information respecting Prince Radolin's communication to the Sultan. It made no reference whatever to reform, but, in answer to a request for advice, it recommended to the Sultan that the names of all military Commanders and civil functionaries proposed for employment should be presented to His Imperial Majesty by a Commission of four Ministers, so that the Sultan would not be responsible for the appointments; and, in the event of occurrences such as those of Sassoon giving rise to complaints from the Powers, he would free himself from blame by dismissing both the functionaries and the Commission.

The Sultan was not pleased with this Machiavellian advice, and he taxed the German Ambassador with listening to the unfounded statements of persons who had requited with ingratitude the benefits with which they had been loaded by His Majesty (this apparently referred to the Grand Vizier, who, for the last few days, has been in disgrace).

Prince Radolin's communication was written down beforehand, and was shown to my informant, who believes it to have been drawn up by the Emperor William.

No. 70.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 20.)

(No. 141.) *Constantinople, April 20, 1895, 7·45 P.M.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

I RECEIVED a message yesterday from the Sultan to the effect that the Turkish Commission of Reforms would commence their work to-day. The President of the Commission, Turkhan Pasha, was at the Porte this afternoon, but, so far as I can ascertain, his colleagues are not yet chosen, and nothing seems to have been done.

No. 70*

Sir M. Durand to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 21.)

(No. 20.) *Tehran, April 21, 1895.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 11 of the 19th instant, I have just received a report from Mr. Paton, who mentions the existence of a Secret Society known as "Henchakians," who contemplate some hostile action against Turkey without delay, and regard the Commission as useless. The information on the subject is vague. Her Majesty's Consul-General reports from Tabriz that guns which have been manufactured there have been and are occasionally sent into Armenian territory. When Colonel Picot was in Azerbaijan he ascertained that the Russian Armenians are in the habit of bringing large numbers of rifles across the Aras River to Maku and its neighbourhood, from whence the smuggling of them across the Turkish frontier would be attended with no difficulty.

I have sent the above information to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.

No. 71.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 222. Confidential.) *Constantinople, April 14, 1895.*
My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 175 of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing an extract from a private letter respecting the state of Palu.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 71.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.) *Erzeroum, March 26, 1895.*
Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy of an extract from a private letter, dated the 9th March, from Kharput, giving further details as to the affair at Havap or Habap, near Palu, about which your Excellency addressed an inquiry to me in your telegram of the 9th ultimo.

The writer of the letter, who is an old resident and a most competent observer, adds some general observations on the condition of the Kharput district, which he considers never to have been so bad as at the present moment; and he seems to despair of even a good Governor-General like Raouf Pasha, who is now on his way to Kharput, being able to make head against the prevailing flood of corruption and misgovernment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 71.

Extract of Letter from Dr. Barnum.

Kharput, March 9, 1895.

IN the Palu district is an Armenian village of about 130 houses, Kapu-Achanuz. A young man who had been in banishment in Tripoli, a native of the village, is said to have escaped, and an order was given to look for him in that village. As he could not be found, a man was taken from every house to Palu and imprisoned. Where there was no man a woman, I believe, was taken, so the whole number of prisoners was 100 or 120. After a few days' confinement, and the payment of 150*l.*, they were released on bail.

The Palu villages have, some of them, for many years had a struggle with the Beys as to the ownership of the land which the villagers cultivate. Three years ago the Central Government decreed that the land should belong neither to Bey nor

villager, but to itself, and an official was sent to sell the land. The Beys bribed him and he left the land as he found it. The villagers furnish the seed, pay the taxes, give to the Government a tithe, and the Beys take 1½ of 10.

A few weeks ago two men were sent from the village of Habap to report on the case for a final settlement. For a "consideration" they were ready to report in favour of the villagers, especially as one of the leading Beys of the district is an enemy of the sons of Sheriff Bey, who claims the village. The pretended owner of the village represented to the Palu Government that the people of Habap were in league with the Kapu-Achmaz people, so fifteen of the leading men of the village, an aged priest, Der Toros, among them, were taken to Palu and imprisoned. They are out of prison now, but under arrest and examination. This was doubtless done to intimidate them, and prevent them from pressing the claim for the land.

Hagop Effendi Simonian, the chief teacher in the Armenian school in Kharput, is from Habap, and connected with one of the families who have been pressing the land suit. The Commission who went from here to report on this business were referred to him for an arrangement as to the terms of the report, and this week he was placed under arrest, his house searched, and his books and papers taken to Mezré. He has understood that the initiative was from Palu, and the motive the same.

This village of Habap is some two hours from Palu, and it is the most enterprising village of the district. For about three months past the Commissioner of Police, with eight or ten horsemen, has quartered himself on the village, and the villagers are obliged to support these men. I think there are no Turks in the village. The Commissioner himself occupies the room connected with the school, to the damage of the school itself. That whole region is terribly oppressed by the Beys, the Kurds, and the Government itself.

Almost worse than the taxes is the burden of the tax-collectors. They are omnipresent. They not only live upon the people and treat them with great cruelty, they compel them to give bribes, and they treat the young women in a most shameful manner. This is true of this whole region.

I have been told that, in the village of Haboosi, four hours from this, the zaptiehs have fed 600 kilés of barley, each kilé worth half-a-lira. There may be some exaggeration in this, but the fact remains that this is becoming an intolerable burden. The zaptiehs pay, I believe, about 10*l.* for the position, and they also bribe their Chiefs to send them to the villages.

The most intelligent Christians, men who are often in the villages, and who have close relations with the Turks, tell me that the condition of the country and Government has never been so bad as it is now, nor have the relations between the Turks and Christians been so strained. An intelligent neighbour, who has dealings with the village of Vastatil, two hours from Mezré, says that the Zaptieh Mulazim has taken from that single village 10,000 piastres in bribes.

The Mektoubdji, who has recently been removed, but who waits for his successor, boasted the other day of the amount of money that he had taken, and he said, "I shall take it to the day I leave." A policeman, who was stationed in this city for a few months, is said to have collected from merchants, muleteers, &c., 400 or 500 liras. The Government is corrupt through and through; from highest to lowest, all are engaged in plunder, and it would seem as though the Government was organized for that purpose.

During a residence of thirty-six years I have never known such a desperate condition as the present. Raouf Pasha, who is on his way here, is a good man; but how can one man stem such a flood?

No. 72.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 223.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 14, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, transmitting a despatch received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the present condition of the Van Vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 72.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, March 29, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the present condition of the Van Vilayet, which Mr. Hallward describes as showing no sign of improvement, but rather the reverse, since the appointment of the Sassoon Commission of Inquiry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 72.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Van, March 19, 1895.*

THE condition of this vilayet shows no signs of improvement, but rather the reverse. It was hoped that the appointment of the Commission of Inquiry at Moush might have some effect in modifying the attitude of the Government and the Turks generally towards the Christians; but I regret to say that no such effect has been produced. On the contrary, a more than usually fanatical spirit is manifesting itself, not only among the soldiers, but among the Kurds and other Moslems. There is no doubt whatever that they have the idea that the Sassoon affair was a mere episode in the Government's general policy in suppressing the Christian element in Kurdistan. The soldiers, on their return from Moush, told many of the Armenian villagers what had happened at Sassoon, and that their turn would come next if they remained Christian. They seem to regard their proceedings at Sassoon in the light of a religious war.

In my despatch of the 1st December last I had the honour to report the case of an Armenian being flayed alive by Kurds. It appears that the individual who is responsible for this atrocity is a certain Sheikhi Bey. The Armenian was in charge of a monastery called Sourp Astvadzazin, and was going to make some complaint to the Kaïmakam of Garchigan against Sheikhi Bey, when he was waylaid and taken to the latter's house. The Bey had him well beaten, and told him he must become a Moslem; on his refusing he broke his arm and finally had him flayed, and then burnt his body in a neighbouring wood. The victim's relations complained to Moussa Bey, a relation of Sheikhi Bey, who has a better reputation than the latter, but were told that, unless they became Moslems, they would all be killed. They then went to the Kaïmakam of Vostan, who put Sheikhi Bey in prison for a short time, and then let him out.

In my despatch of the 18th September last I reported the plundering of the village of Ardavez by Kurds. The villagers as well as the Kurds were subsequently summoned before the Vali, who violently abused the Kurds, and told them they would have to restore the stolen property. The villagers went away delighted, but the Vali subsequently called the Kurds, and told them to pay no attention to what he had said, as he did not mean it for them, but merely that the outside public might think that he dealt even justice to all. This was told by the Kurds to an Armenian whom they met on their way back, and who pretended to be a Turk.

I cannot vouch for the absolute truth of the story, but, in any case, the villagers have not recovered any of their property.

About four months ago some zaptiehs went to collect taxes from the Armenian village of Sourp Vartan, near here: they found that the Headman of the village had collected the money and spent it himself; thereupon they told him to say that the money had been given by the villagers to Armenian outlaws, and they arrested four of them on the charge of harbouring outlaws; one has died in prison, the other three are still in prison.

Mr. Devey reported the murder of four Armenians near Shattakh in his despatch of the 2nd August, 1893. The murder was committed by the notorious Shakir (*vide* my despatch of the 28th August last), who at that time farmed the sheep tax in Norduz. The relations of the murdered men came here to demand justice, but could

get nothing done. Last summer, however, the Vali passed through Shattakh when on tour in the province and summoned Shakir to pay £T. 40 for the four lives. I do not know how this sum was fixed; the life of a Moslem is valued by law at £T. 300. Shakir paid the sum, which he collected from Armenian villages.

It appears that an Association was formed by the Armenians of Shattakh to resist the exactions and oppressions of the Kurds, a measure which would seem to be to a certain extent justified by experience, if statistics which I have obtained are correct. According to these, in sixteen years Kurds have stolen from fifteen Armenian villages of that district upwards of 11,000 sheep. In ten years some eighty Armenians have been killed, and in the last two years about 200 families have emigrated. Besides this, every village has to support one or more Kurdish Agas.

The Government considered the Association a seditious one, and that, I believe, is the reason of the arrest of twenty-seven Armenians, mentioned in my despatch of the 8th January last, who were accused of being concerned with the murder of the Turkish Lieutenant, though innocent of any complicity in the affair.

Shakir levied contributions to the value of about £T. 40 a few weeks ago on the village of Gajel in that district; this village has suffered much from Kurdish raids. Some of the inhabitants are now living as paupers in Van, others in other villages.

Respecting the Sassoon girls alluded to in my despatch of the 18th February last as having been disposed of in this vilayet, I can now give a few more definite details. Nine were seen being brought by soldiers from Mousb on their way back to Van, one of them quite small. Two, I hear, on fairly good authority, are in the possession of Nouri Effendi, head of police, one of the worst characters in Van; two more are said to be with a certain Ali Aga, an officer in the Vali's suite, and four other officials are said to have four others. It is rumoured that there are also other girls from Sassoon in Turkish houses. It is also said that some of them are changed about among the Turks, so that it is not easy to localize them. The soldiers told the villagers that many more girls had been carried off by Mustapha Pasha, a Kurd of the Miranli tribe, who lives in or near Jezirè, on the Tigris, in winter, and in the Bohtan region in summer.

I mentioned Hussein Pasha, of Patnotz, in this connection in my previous despatch. A week or two ago an Armenian peasant was asked in Kurdish by a girl, who found herself alone for the moment at a stopping place on the road near Arjish, what he meant by smoking in Ramazan, she taking him for a Moslem. On finding that he was an Armenian, she said she was from Sassoon and was being sent by Hussein Pasha, with one of her companions, as a present to a Kurd of Abaga, near Bayazid. She also told him there were twenty others with Hussein Pasha, and asked him to tell this to all Armenians he saw, in case there should be any means of saving them.

I have by me the original of a Petition signed by 120 Armenians and seventy Moslems of the Arjish district, which was drawn up in September last when news got abroad that measures of repression had been adopted against the Kurds of the Bohtanik region (*vide* my despatch of the 10th December last); it was thought that there was going to be a general measure of reform, and the Petition was addressed to the officers who were supposed to be in charge of this measure, and prayed for redress against the Haideranli Kurds. The Petition was never delivered, as nothing was done in the way of reform. This Petition shows that the Armenians are not the only section of the population which is discontented with the present state of things.

At Soskun, a village in that district, the Kurdish Aga, Galgantsi Dervish, and his sons, lately, on different occasions, violated some of the Christian women in broad daylight in presence of their husbands; the Armenian Headman Bedros made some protest, but had to flee for his life to Arjish.

Some villages of Adeljevaz were lately plundered by Hamzu Oglu, a Haideranli Kurd: 119 Armenian families emigrated from that district last year to Persia and Russia, being reduced to poverty by the Kurds, leaving 42,000 piastres (= 380*l.*) arrears of taxes.

To turn to the other side of the vilayet, Daniel, priest of Arag, near Bashkalè, in Hekkiari, is anxious to get back his daughter who has been taken to Bashkalè by a Kurd, with the idea of making her a Moslem and marrying her. The Vali has telegraphed to the authorities of Bashkalè that she is to be sent to the Bishop here as soon as the weather gets warmer and finer, say in a month or so.

The father of the Armenian girl from Kasrig (*vide* my despatch of the 18th February), who was carried off by Kurds and is now in the village of Suadoun Bey, a colonel of Hamidiés, son of Derbaz Aga, is also anxious about his daughter, who has now been gone about six weeks. He was away when she was abducted, but the mother applied two or three times to the Kaimakam with no result, and now the father is trying what he can do through the Bishop to get the Vali to have the girl restored to him.

The unfortunate peasants are already being pressed very hard for this year's taxes; the zaptiehs, when they go round to collect taxes, are almost as great a curse to them as the Kurds; they maltreat them, and extort large supplies for themselves and their horses. In a village I know near here, eight zaptiehs ate thirty-three chickens in three days.

I suppose the Government has extra need of money just now, as the Redifs are to be called out at the end of Ramazan.

The tradesmen in the town also suffer from the present state of things, as the soldiers, officials, and Kurds continually take goods without paying for them; no redress is obtainable; trade with the villages has much fallen off, owing to want of security on the roads and poverty of the villagers.

Perhaps the worst features of the present situation are the absolute indifference of the Government to any complaints on the part of Christians, however well grounded, and the impunity which all Moslem wrong-doers enjoy; to which must be added the prevalence of an unusually fanatical feeling against Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 73.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April 22.*)

(No. 224. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 14, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting an assault on an Armenian by a Turkish Major.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 73.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, March 29, 1895.*

AS I had the honour to report to your Excellency, by telegraph, on the 26th instant, on the evening of Friday, the 22nd March, a Turkish artillery Major named Hassan Effendi Muhi-ed-Din, who has the reputation of being at least eccentric, if not a little mad, committed a brutal assault upon an Armenian tailor named Tatos, in a shop in the bazaar. After abusing him for not having made a fur cap to his liking he drew his sword, and cut him repeatedly over the scalp with it, inflicting four or five painful though not dangerous cuts, as the sword was not sharp. He then called in his soldier servant, whom he had posted outside, and told him to have the blade sharpened, for they were going to kill all the Christians at Bairam, as they had killed the people of Sassoon and Talori.

The injured man was afraid to lodge a complaint against his assailant, but on Sunday, the 24th March, he went round to some of the Consulates, and showed his wounds to my Russian and Italian colleagues and myself. The same evening M. Maximow sent his Dragoman to bring the case to the notice of the Vali, who appears to have received him politely, saying that he had not heard anything of the matter, and ordering the Chief of Police to go with the Russian Dragoman and inspect the man's wounds, which was done the same night.

The following morning my Russian and French colleagues met at my house, and the former requested us to support his action by sending our Dragomans to make similar representations to the Vali. To this we readily consented, as nothing had been done to

punish the offender, and it was clear that this was a good opportunity of drawing his Excellency's attention to the growing lawlessness and aggressive conduct of some of the soldiery and of the Mussulman townspeople, and of suggesting that precautionary measures should be adopted to prevent any disturbance at the approaching Bairam festival.

Our message was conveyed the same evening to the Vali by our two Dragomans, in polite and moderate language, the tenour of which had been agreed upon between us in M. Maximow's presence. But the Vali received it extremely ill, saying that our action constituted an interference which he could not tolerate, coming as it did from the three Consulates; that although the Powers had been allowed by favour to interfere in the Sassoon affair, this right of interference did not extend to Erzeroum; that these stories were mere inventions, and that, in the absence of any formal complaint or Petition by the injured party to the competent authorities, he could do nothing.

On the 26th instant, my colleagues and I agreed to send an identical telegram to our respective Ambassadors, relating the incident, and the reception given to our friendly representations by the Vali, adding some explanations of the motives for our action, with an expression of the opinion that the Porte should give orders that the affair should be dealt with according to law, and leaving it to your Excellencies to consider what notice, if any, should be taken of the Vali's incorrect language and attitude.

After we had separated, but before our telegrams were dispatched, the French Consul received a note from M. Maximow, which he communicated to me, stating that his conscience would not allow him to join in the complaint against the Vali contained in the last phrase of our telegram, as his Dragoman, at least, had been politely received by his Excellency. He had already told us that he attributed the Vali's outbreak of temper to some want of tact and discretion in the manner in which our Dragomans had conveyed our message, but I am unable to understand upon what he based his opinion. We accordingly inserted an explanation, to the effect that our Russian colleague no longer associated himself in the expression (which does not indeed appear to me to be of much consequence), and that it was therefore sent jointly by M. Bergeron and myself.

Although so far no official notice whatever has been taken of Mujor Hassan Effendi's misconduct, while his victim has been called to account by the police for daring to complain to foreign Consuls, I am glad to be able to report that our representations seem to have had a good effect, for the greatest precautions have been taken for the past three days by the military authorities; the Mollahs have received orders to use the most pacificatory language in their sermons, and the Bairam festival has not, up till now, been attended by any of the disorders which were anticipated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 74.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 226.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 14, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 198 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, inclosing an extract from a further letter from Dr. Jewett on the recent Tokat disturbance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 No. 74.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 5, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 26th ultimo, I have the honour to inclose herewith extract of a further letter from Dr. Jewett on the recent Tokat disturbance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 74.

Dr. Jewett to Consul Longworth.

(Extract.) *Sivas, March 26, 1895.*

IN my last of the 20th March I gave you the Vali's first account of the Tokat affair of the 19th March. Later, he told me only one Armenian was killed, and tried to make out that it was not a serious affair. He went to Tokat on the 21st. He has not yet sent me the report he promised to give me.

According to the talk in this city it was a very serious affair. From various sources I should judge that perhaps 100 Armenians were wounded, and from five to ten Armenians were killed or died of wounds in the first forty-eight hours. Few, if any, Turks were killed, I think. They say the police and soldiers did not get between the Turks and the Armenians whom they were attacking, but surrounded the whole crowd.

The inclosed letter is a translation from the Armenian of a letter which purports to have been written by the Bishop's representative at Tokat.

There is reason to believe that revolutionists talked in a manner intended to stir up the Mahommedans, and it is not impossible that they hired Turks to assist in making trouble. A letter from Tokat, dated the 13th March, said there is much talk among the Turks about killing the Giaours. Some of the Turks said they had permission, or an order, from Constantinople to kill the Armenians and take possession of their wives and property. Zaptiehs indulged in this sort of talk, it is reported. The following is a translation of a letter from an Armenian at Tokat, who is worthy of some confidence:—

"I write you these few lines in haste. Of late the Mahommedans of Tokat have been threatening that they would kill the Armenians. During the last three or four days a Sheikh, acting as an insane person or idiot, has been going about the streets shouting and inciting the Turks. It is confirmed that officials of the Government and other high persons, Salih Bey and other Notables, put words in the mouth of this fool and encouraged him. Previous to this, Turks, on the slightest pretext, beat certain Armenians in the market. We were apprehensive that such conduct would lead to serious consequences. Yesterday, our apprehensions were realized for the Armenians. A great quarrel and fight took place; hundreds of Armenians were wounded, and some died; others of the wounded will probably die to-day. We will write more extensively later. The attack began in the market; a fellah (auctioneer), bargaining with an honest Armenian trader, began to blaspheme the religion and faith of the Armenians. When the Armenian asked 'What right have you to blaspheme my religion?' the Turk began to beat him; thereupon some soldiers who were present rushed upon the Armenians, crying 'Kill the Armenians!' and five Armenians fell wounded; one of them, wounded by a bayonet near the ear, is about to die. The wounded men appealed to the Government for justice and protection, but the Government was indifferent. Then the Armenians closed their shops and assembled at the church, then they appealed for protection. When more than 1,000 Armenians were assembled there, the Turks attacked them with fire-arms, swords, and sticks. It is impossible to describe the scene which followed. The crying of 200 children of the school, the wailing of women round about, the noise of guns and clubs, baffle description. The Armenians had not a single fire-arm or sword of any sort. The Turks beat one old priest almost to death, and butchered another (person) like a cow. Police, zaptiehs, and soldiers were on the side of the Turks. The Armenians of this city, being without hope from the Government and officers, appeal for assistance. If we are not speedily protected, and this evil remedied, the fate of Sassoon will be ours."

It is reported that 250 zaptiehs have been collected at Tokat. That leaves only 100 to 150 to protect all the rest of the province.

Inclosure 3 in No. 74.

Letter to Armenian Bishop at Sivas on Tokat Disturbances.

Monsigneur, *Tokat, le* 7 (19) *Mars*, 1895, 1 *heure de la nuit.*

LA populace Turque de Tokat cherchait dans ces jours à créer un prétexte de querelle avec les Arméniens.

Des officiers et des gendarmes ont plusieurs fois publiquement battu, jusqu'à étourdir, dans les marchés, les pauvres Arméniens qui avaient osé demander leurs créances, ou comme s'ils eussent la bouche sentant d'eau de vie.

La populace Turque, encouragée par des faits pareils, attendait un signal particulier pour s'élancer sur les Arméniens sans armes.

Un jeune Mollah nommé Mahdi, également appelé Mudjedid, courant dans tous les marchés, criait à toute force avant un jour: "O frères Mahométans! toutes les Puissances infidèles ("Kiafir") de l'Europe se sont réunies contre nous, les Musulmans, et elles nous tendent des pièges, c'est pourquoi je me presse de vous inviter aujourd'hui à la Mosquée de Takhedjiler, au Conseil et à la prière, pour prendre des mesures de notre liberté."

Nous ignorons les détails et les décisions de leur Conseil, mais en voici le résultat fatal:

Une foule enragée, composée de soldats, de gendarmes, et de Bashi-Bozouks commence par la place, appelée Meydan, à se jeter sur les Arméniens et les mettre au feu et à l'épée, et à reprendre leur ravage à tous les côtés, et à jeter par terre quelques dizaines de blessés. Malgré l'avis expédilif, le Gouvernement demeure indifférent et insouciant, et ayant été sûr du courage de sa populace perturbatrice, n'envoie-t-il pas même un employé à l'endroit des désordres.

La conduite indifférente du Gouvernement a encouragé et animé la populace Turque, et en même temps a effrayé et terrorisé les Arméniens qui, prévoyant le danger imminent et inévitable, commencent à fermer leurs boutiques et à se retirer chez eux.

Mais hélas! les quartiers, les églises, la résidence du Prélat des Arméniens avaient déjà été assiégés par la multitude Turque ayant à sa tête des soldats et des gendarmes. . . .

Plusieurs Arméniens ont été égorgés comme des moutons et étendus par terre dans les rues; quelques centaines grièvement blessés y sont abandonnés!

A peine échappé à cette boucherie humaine, je me sauve effrayé chez moi où je commence, les larmes de sang aux yeux, à écrire ces quelques lignes, ayant recours au secours immédiat de Dieu et de votre Sainteté.

Au secours pour le peuple Chrétien de Tokat! au secours pour l'amour de Dieu! secours au nom de l'humanité! chaque minute de votre secours sauvera la vie de plusieurs personnes! . . . . . Empressez-vous donc au secours! . . . . .

(Un Arménien échappé de la boucherie.)

No. 75.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 22.)

(No. 227.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 14, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting an attack on the Armenian member of the Sivas Administrative Council.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 75.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, April* 3, 1895.

DR. JEWETT, in his letter of the 26th ultimo, reports as follows:—

"To-day at Sivas an attempt was made to assassinate Portukian, an Armenian member of the Administrative Council. He received several sword-wounds, but will probably recover. He was assaulted in a narrow street by four men as he was leaving the church. He was knocked down from behind, and says he did not see his assailants. They fled and have not been caught. Some women say they were Armenians, and give their names. The Kadi, who is the Vali's Vekil (Deputy), said one was caught. The Alai Bey told me a few minutes later none were caught, and the Armenians say about twenty Armenians have been arrested on suspicion. It is always difficult to learn the truth.

"Portukian signed a paper demanded by the Vali saying the Tokat post robbery and the Hadjee Musta affair were Armenian revolutionists. He is regarded as a Turkophile and informer. . . ."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 76.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 22.)

(No. 228.)
My Lord, *Pera, April* 10, 1895.

I HAD the honour to be received in private audience by His Imperial Majesty the Sultan after the ceremony of the Selamlik on Friday last the 5th instant. His Majesty plunged at once *in medias res* and said that after reflection on our conversation of the 21st ultimo (reported in my despatch No. 189 of the 27th March) he had appointed Turkhan Pasha, sometime Ottoman Minister at Madrid, and lately Vali of Crete, as President of a Commission of Inquiry into the affairs of Armenia. The other members of the Commission would shortly be named, and he hoped it would be able to commence its labours in about ten days. He had selected Turkhan Pasha as an honest and intelligent official, who had given proof of his capacity when Governor-General in Crete.

His Majesty also said the Porte had given him a list of Armenians in prison, which was, however, unfortunately, incomplete and misleading.

He had observed with regret that the names of some political prisoners whose release he had ordered, still figured in this document, which also included persons condemned for ordinary crimes, such as murder and robbery. He had therefore ordered the preparation of a new and accurate list, and only the day before had personally desired the Minister of Justice and others specially occupied with the matter to lose no time in completing their labours.

I replied that I had already communicated to your Lordship, in my telegram No. 137 of the 1st April, a message from His Majesty much to the same effect as what he had just said. In reply, I had been instructed to express the satisfaction of Her Majesty's Government at the action taken respecting Armenian prisoners. As to the introduction of reforms, Her Majesty's Government were gratified to hear that His Majesty proposed to deal seriously with the question. They were themselves elaborating a programme of reforms in concert with the Governments of France and Russia, and as soon as it was ready would communicate it to the Sublime Porte.

After a moment's reflection, the Sultan asked whether it would not be better for us to communicate directly with the Turkish Commission instead of preparing an independent scheme of reforms. I replied that I could express no opinion on the point without consulting my French and Russian colleagues. His Majesty pressed me to consult them on the subject, and repeated several times that he saw no need for our making a formal communication, and that it would be much simpler to come to an understanding by friendly discussion and unofficial exchange of ideas.

I said that I would of course mention His Majesty's views to the French and Russian Ambassadors, but that, in my opinion, it would be best to wait till the plan

was complete, and then deal with it as a whole. When ready, it would be presented in the form most convenient to His Imperial Majesty.

The Sultan seemed disappointed, and wished to know the nature of the reforms contemplated. I replied that I was not at present at liberty to lay the details of the scheme before him, but that the guiding principle would be to give security and contentment to the Armenians by obtaining for them a fair share in the Administration. The reforms would be based mainly on existing Laws and Regulations, which were unfortunately now a dead letter, and they would contain nothing which would cause prejudice to the rights of the Moslem community.

The Sultan seemed relieved at this last statement, and said that under these circumstances he felt no cause for anxiety, as most of the laws and Regulations had been made in his own reign. He also repeated several times that the Armenians had already a fair share in the Administration. I replied that this, though true in theory, was unhappily not true in practice, as was proved by the Returns sent me by British Consular officers.

His Majesty said he would send me a list of Armenian functionaries, and dilated at some length on the number who held appointments in the Civil List Administration or as servants in the Palace. I replied that I feared this was hardly enough to satisfy the Armenians. They required security for life, property, and honour in the provinces where they resided.

The Sultan seemed much annoyed at this observation, and insisted with some warmth that the continued existence of the Armenians was the clearest proof that they enjoyed that security; if the Ottoman Government in his reign and those of his ancestors had not followed this policy there would not be any Armenians left; as it was, they were rich and the Turks poor.

I said Her Majesty's Government had no doubt of the kind and benevolent intentions of His Imperial Majesty, but that, unfortunately, the local authorities were in the habit of sending false reports to Constantinople in order to conceal their own misdeeds. His Majesty expressed pleasure at the opinion entertained of his personal feelings, but asked whether my information respecting the conduct of the local authorities was based on conjecture or on accurate reports. I replied that for years I had been reading reports by Her Majesty's Consular officers, who had no bias against the Turks, and no object in misrepresenting the truth, and these reports had left no doubt in my mind that the Armenians were misgoverned and ill-treated. I then said, in corroboration of the statement that His Majesty was deceived by the local authorities, that I had been instructed by Her Majesty's Government to call His Majesty's attention to the manner in which signatures were obtained by force to telegrams and addresses dispatched to Constantinople, thanking His Majesty for the good government enjoyed by Armenians. The Sultan said he was at a loss to understand such conduct; he always treated even his servants with consideration, and was pained by harsh conduct towards subordinates. The Commission should most carefully inquire into these stories of signatures being obtained by force.

I then said I trusted His Imperial Majesty would not suppose that my Government or myself were animated by any hostile intentions; on the contrary, our desire was to improve the relations existing between the two countries. His Majesty thanked me, and expressed the hope that Her Majesty's Government would publish some statement to correct the hostile attitude of the press. I replied that they had no power to correct it, and that its present tone was in a great measure due to the refusal of the Turkish Government to allow correspondents to enter the country. The Sultan said this was only a temporary measure while the Commission was sitting; foreigners ignorant of the country and language must inevitably be deceived, and would be likely to call white black and black white. He again requested me to render him a service by making every effort to remove the opinions hostile to himself and to Turkey now prevalent in England. He added a hope that the friendly disposition of Her Majesty's Government and my good-will might lead to a friendly settlement of the question.

I expressed the conviction that if His Majesty would adopt the advice which the three Powers would give him, the prosperity and stability of His Majesty's Empire and the well-being of his subjects would be materially increased.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 77.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April 22.*)

(No. 229.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 16, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatches Nos. 186 and 202 of the 27th March and 3rd April, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the ill-treatment of the Iskan Topach villagers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 77.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, March 21, 1895.*

IN connection with my despatch of the 12th instant, I beg leave to annex herewith an extract of a more recent letter from Dr. Jewett, as well as the substance in translation of the appeal therein inclosed from twenty-six Armenian villagers of Iskan Topach, in the Charkishla or Tounouz sub-district of the Sivas Vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 77.

Dr. Jewett to Consul Longworth.

(Extract.) *Sivas, March 12, 1895.*

I INCLOSE a paper giving an account of the affair I mentioned in my last letter, which occurred in a village of Charkishla.

A Petition or statement similar to the one inclosed was presented to the Vali yesterday. He appeared to be very much excited about it. He called the Commissaire of Police and one or two other officials, and demanded if they had any information in regard to the matter, and they said no. He ordered the Commissaire of Police to take zaptiehs, and to go to the village with the two men, investigate, and send a report by telegraph to-day. The Commissaire of Police is one of a clique of five corrupt, bribe-extorting, mischief-makers who live on the Armenian question, and it would not surprise me if he reported that the village is living in peace and prosperity, and that the villagers unanimously express their thanks for the paternal care and solicitude of the Government under whose beneficent rule they have nothing to ask for; or he may report that he has captured a great band of revolutionists with stores of arms and ammunition.

Substance of the Iskan-Topach Petition.

At 3 o'clock (9 P.M.) of the night of the 1st (13th) February the Kaimakam of the Tounouz Caza, with Régie guards and villagers of Sagher, Stchir-Kishla, and Chiksian, numbering more than 600, besieged our village of Iskan Topach, composed of fifty houses, outraged our families and plundered our houses, carrying off even our corn. Being frightened we got out of bed and fled to the mountain, where we still are with our children. In ransacking our houses they discovered a list of eighteen names of the same writing, five Martini rifles, eight to ten paper cartridges, and some bullets, all introduced, no doubt, by our enemies. They now seize those of our families, who, forced by the cold, re-enter the village, and they stop our going to Sivas. Out of twenty-two villagers arrested during that terrible night, only Berrakeloglou Serop, Karaghiaourloglou Meghérditch, and Yazidjian Khachig obtained their release, the rest being kept in prison without examination or trial. They managed thus, we are told, to get themselves released. When Donig Effendi, of our village, was, two years ago, cross-examiner of the Tounouz Court, fifteen to twenty brigands attacked his house at night, wounded his people, and robbed him of everything. Four of our villagers were then arrested as accomplices, but about a

month ago they were let out on declaring that Donig Effendi was a revolutionist. The above-named three persons knowing this did the same, and are now free. Our lives, homes, and property are in danger. It is with great difficulty we send you this letter. We recall that frightful night, and we appeal to you for protection. Away from our dwellings we weep in rain and snow. Those who make us so openly suffer will surely be punished. We beseech you to help us out of pity rather than kindness, so as to save our lives at least.

(Signed and sealed by Headmen, 5 Elders, and 21 villagers.)

No. 78.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 231.)

Constantinople, April 17, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a Report which I have received from a private source.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 78.

Report of Sassoon Affairs, by a Resident at Bitlis.

YOU may be sure I was much pleased to receive yesterday your letter of the 30th November, 1894, and pleased also that it should get through safely at a time when we know that many of our letters are tampered with, and when nearly all our newspapers for two or three weeks past have been held at the police-station for inspection.

I have thought of writing you on subjects of considerable interest in these parts, but the uncertainty of having what I wrote reach you, and the unknown amount of risk I was running, should it be known that I was in communication with you, has deterred me; but now that the foreign Commission has probably reached Moush, and their proximity is likely to exert a wholesome restraint on this absolutely unscrupulous Government, I deem it a duty no less than a privilege to do what I can towards letting the truth be known, especially when I am assured of an attentive listener who can make good use of what he hears.

In November 1893 you heard something of matters in Dalvoreeg. At that time I had been unable to get the facts well in hand; and as what has taken place this year is the direct sequel of those events, I must begin with them.

First, you must know that the Armenians living among the Kurds in the mountainous region south of Moush are an exceptionally hardy, brave set, rendered so by their free conflicts with local and nomadic Kurds. Yes, a kind of feudal system was still in vogue among them. The various Kurdish Chiefs who claim certain Armenian villages as their own would exact tribute from them, and would help them against other hostile Kurdish tribes. The villages of Dalvoreeg and a few near them for the last few years have refused to pay the Government taxes on the ground that they could not afford to give more than what the Kurds exacted from them. These were the kind of people, and the natural features of the country; the kind of place that Armenian agitators sought, and were not slow to find. The Government suspected that such men had head-quarters in the region, and in the winter of 1892-93 called a number of Kurdish Chiefs of that and surrounding regions to Bitlis, and practically ordered them to attack the Armenians in the spring, promising them all the booty they could get, and taking upon himself the responsibility of all they might kill.

The last week in May 1893 Daghnatian was betrayed into the hands of the Government and brought to Moush. Mr. Graves was there at the time. The prisoner was brought to Bitlis on the 6th June, and on the way from Moush the zaptiehs in charge shattered one leg with a gun-stock to prevent any possibility of his escape. It was a short time after his capture that what had been under way for some time took place at Dalvoreeg. This is the name of a village in a small district of the same name, containing nine small villages within 2 or 3 miles of one another—altogether

from 300 to 400 houses. It was under the village of Dalvoreeg that the Kurds began to gather, most of them of the Bakranlee tribe. The Armenians watched them assembling for several days, and finally were convinced that they intended an attack; and, finally, on the eighth day, to bring things to a head before more forces should arrive, the Armenians precipitated the conflict by firing several shots among the Kurds. There were but 60 Armenians, while there must have been 4,000 Kurds; but the place of the Armenians was so strong, and the Kurds had to come into the open to make the attack, that at nightfall the Kurds were compelled to withdraw; their loss was at least 100 killed, and probably over 200, while the Armenians had 6 killed, one of whom was a woman. It is quite certain that there were no outsiders among the Armenians, and, with the exception of two or three breech-loaders, all the rest had ordinary flint-locks. Some say there were no breech-loaders at all. The Government no sooner heard what turn things had taken than several "taboors" (battalions) with ammunition and a number of mountain pieces were dispatched to Dalvoreeg, and the Governor-General himself went to Moush.

From the nature of the preparations, it would seem that an attack was contemplated on the Armenians; but, either not being confident of success, or receiving orders from Constantinople to keep things quiet, nothing of importance was done further than to lay the district under siege with troops and Kurds. The former pitched camp near the villages, and in a famine year tied their horses in the standing grain, and generally laid the fields waste. The Governor-General called several of the leading men to Moush, but they would not come till hostages had been given. When this had been done, they were asked why they were not loyal to the Government, and pay their taxes. They replied that they could not serve several Kings. They would be glad to serve the Government alone, if it would only guarantee to protect them from the Kurds. This protection was promised them if they would give up what arms they had, and submit wholly to the Government. The Armenians were unwilling to trust themselves to the Government, and refused to comply; so matters rested. As the weather grew colder the troops were brought to the village of Semal, near Moush, and when snow came they were brought to the town itself. Meanwhile, Daghnatian was getting along slowly with his leg. It was a bad case. The army and city doctors said there was no other way but amputation; but a born surgeon—only an Armenian villager—objected, extracted part of the bone, and got things to move slowly in good order. During this time he was carried frequently to the court-house and to the Governor-General's dwelling, and was often carefully questioned. He was always outspoken and fearless in what he said. He said plainly that he had come to these parts in order to induce the people to stand up for their rights. He had no fault to find with the Central Government; it did not know what was done by the Kurds and officials in the provinces. He was persuading the people to endure this sort of thing no longer, but to make their complaints known. All the Armenians were in sympathy with this movement. If any said they were not, they were lying; and so on. It was about a year ago this time, I think, that he was taken by the southern route ostensibly to Constantinople. There he is said to have turned State's evidence, and to receive a salary from the Government. Some say it is not he, but another Daghnatian. If it be true that it is he, I cannot believe that he has forsaken the cause for which he suffered so much, though he is a Catholic, and not a Gregorian. As State's evidence he could save his skin, and still serve his cause by declaring, as he did here, that all Armenians were in sympathy with any movement that was likely, by drawing attention to the real state of things in the country, to bring relief. It may be that he gave the Porte an exaggerated idea of the state of things in the Moush region, and south, with the express object of stirring things up all the sooner. His one object of agitation was attained in either case, whether as formerly he stirred up the people to stand up for their rights, or as subsequently stirred up the Government as to the growing discontent of the people. I omitted to say that the Kurds felt very sore after the Dalvoreeg battle, and somewhat bitter towards the Government for thus being made its cat's-paw. Some of the Seikhs, in their simplicity, showed the written orders the Government had sent them urging them to make the attack. This is a point I have carefully worked up, and I am thoroughly convinced that both last year and this the Government gave oral and written orders to the Kurds to attack the Armenians, promising them the booty, and relieving them of responsibility as to those they should kill, or as they express it, "Spoils yours, heads ours." The Bakrikee tribe of Kurds alone refused to have any part in the affair both years. The Sassoon Kurds entered into it half-heartedly only after they saw that it was bound to be done, and then they devoted themselves almost exclusively to plunder. In this last conflict they secretly

helped some of the Armenians to escape. Three of their Chiefs the Government imprisoned, either because they had not informed the Government that there was such a movement among the Armenians, or because they were not energetic in the fight—perhaps for both reasons and others not known.

I must just hint at what took place here last winter. I referred to it in my last note, which you probably did not get. Blackmail of the most barefaced kind was rampant, and on a large scale, too, for this country. Not only were many of the rich in Bitlis bled, but many of the well-to-do from distant parts of the province, and several even from outside of it, were brought here, and only released after they had yielded up what it was supposed they were able to. About this time several of the wealthy Armenians from the district south of Moush were invited to visit the Governor-General, but after consulting with their Kurdish lords they declined the invitation.

To make the reign of terror all the more acute, Teacher Markar, of Vartenese, Moush Plain, was publicly hung in Bitlis on the 8th February last, charged with having killed a zaptieh at Avzood the previous winter. This was the first public execution since the time of the Khans and Begs, fifty years ago, and it had a very depressing effect on the whole community. Markar had been active in going to Constantinople and testifying against Moussa Beg, and had also plainly advised his villagers not to submit passively to the outrages of the Kurds. It was probably for this grudge they owed him that he was hung, rather than any proof they could get that he was at Avzood that night, when the real assailant was shot on the spot and hacked to pieces, and the Armenian part of the village was subsequently made the scene of the most unspeakable things by several squads of soldiers. After his execution blackmail flourished all the more easily. It is estimated that as much as 20,000 liras was taken from all quarters. One house is known to have paid from 1,200 to 1,300 liras.

But let us come on to events of more immediate interest. As soon as the snow cleared off in the spring, which cannot have been much earlier than the last of May, a battalion or so of troops was moved up to near the villages of Semal and Sheneeg, some 12 miles south of Moush, and the chief road to all that region. During the winter there had been a chance to come to a good understanding with the Kurds, and more of them as far down as Diarbekir. These began to infest the region, and put it under a kind of siege, especially Dalvoreeg. Some nomadic Kurds pitched their goat-hair tents not far from the village of Semal, and from time to time would add to their flock by subtracting from those of the villagers. At last some of the villagers got together, attacked the Kurds, and took back their sheep with interest. In the skirmish two Kurds were killed.

Another account has it that the Kurds had stolen a number of oxen, that the owner tracked them to the tents of the Kurds, where they found that one had been butchered. The Armenians asked to have the live ones given back to them, but this was refused. Upon this the Armenians returned to their village, and then, returning to the tents with reinforcements, renewed the demand. As a result, a skirmish ensued, in which two Kurds were killed. Whatever kind of animal was stolen, this much seems certain, that the Kurds were the aggressors, and that the Armenians, in attempting to get even with them, killed two of their number. The Kurds immediately took their dead to the Government at Moush, and to make their case all the more effective mutilated the bodies of the slain. They also told the Government that the mountains were full of Armenian and foreign soldiers. This must have been the latter part of June. I must not omit to say that previous to this the villages of Galeomusoor and Galeogumuh, containing together about thirty houses, finding themselves unable to resist the depredations of the Kurds, had abandoned their villages and betaken themselves east to the villages of Sheneeg and Semal. Let me also say that in the spring we heard of a Moorad Effendi who was said to have come from outside and was organizing a band of agitators in the region.

But to go on. The Government gave the Kurds *carte blanche* to do what they could to the Armenians. Not long after, the Chief of the tribe to which the two killed Kurds belonged, with fifty horsemen, after consulting with the Commander of the troops that were stationed there, went near the villages of Sheneeg and Semal, called their chief men, and demanded 20 liras down. The Armenians replied that they had not the ready cash, but would give them the equivalent in kind. This was not satisfactory to the Kurds, who were determined to have a cause for quarrel.

That night, as many of the Armenians were in the mountains keeping their flocks, the Kurds shot and killed a man as he was taking a piece of meat off the fire.

The next morning they attacked and set fire to the two villages, and the flight began. The Armenians defended themselves as best they could from behind rocks, underbrush, and small trees that exist in that part. The day's conflict resulted in twenty Kurds killed and five Armenians, one of whom was a woman.

During the whole of the conflict with the Kurds the women did good service in supplying the men with water, food, and ammunition. On one day a woman was caught going from the village with a large load on her back, which proved to contain ammunition, and was cut down.

The fighting with the Kurds continued for ten days, the Armenians, as a rule, holding their ground, and in several instances repulsing the Kurds. During this time the Government was concentrating troops from all sides; those from Erzeroum, Van, Bitlis, and Sert pouring in from the north—the Moosh side, while those from Diarbekir came in from the south.

Before the Government was through with the matter, practically the whole of the Fourth Army Corps was concentrated, including the reserves, both the "Ihtiat"—those who had served a partial term—and the "Redeef"—those who had served the full term. There were from fifteen to eighteen "tahoors" (battalions) in all. The troops from Erzeroum way had twenty-one mountain pieces with them, and a witness has told me that he saw twelve pass Hatskeuy from the other direction to Moush. It is said that twenty-seven were taken to the scene of action in the mountains. The troops from Bitlis took with their supplies and ammunition ten horse-loads, or eighty 5½-gallon cans, of kerosene. Then there were the "Hamedia" Kurdish horsemen, 300 Hidarlees that passed through Khanoos from Alashgerd way, and 500 Harsanlees that passed through Bodamuk from the parts north of Lake Van. Besides these, there were a few minor tribes from that direction, not regular "Hamedia."

Before matters had ended there had gathered from the south five powerful tribes of Kurds under the Sheikh of Zelon—the Bakranlees, Rushkotlees, Zelonlees, Kheeonlees, and Badnglees. He claimed to have brought on 14,000 warriors. Besides these there were the Sassonlee and Mahoobanlee Kurds, that numbered about 3,000. The large tribe of Balaklees, as I said before, would take no part in the business. There were other minor local tribes that took part, which it is not worth while to enumerate.

Let us now go back to those ten days' fight with the Kurds in and about Sheneeg, Semal, Galeogozan, &c., or what is known as the Sheilak district. During this time Kurds and troops were not only gathering there, but infesting the whole region of Sassoon, and of Khoolp, on the west part of Kharzon, on the south of Sassoon. The troops were on the outside, with the Kurds between them and the Armenians. As I have already said, the Armenians were, as a rule, able to hold their own ground, and in a number of instances repulsed the Kurds.

Moorad Effendi proposed that they attack the troops that had been stationed there before the others came, but the villagers would not listen to it, saying that in some way they would succeed in driving off the Kurds as those in Dalvoreeg had the year before.

And it seems probable, such was the awe the events of the previous year had inspired in the Kurds that, had they been unaided, they would have been unable to have gained a permanent victory over the Armenians. But when the officers saw the Kurds wavering they not only provided them with better arms, but also reinforced them with troops in disguise, dressed as Kurds. Still the Armenians did not fall back. It was not till they saw large reinforcements of uniformed troops coming that they gave in. So far as I can find out they did not purposely fire a single shot at regular troops—certainly not in the first part of the struggle. It was not till these additional troops came that the Armenians began to suspect that the Government was going to do other than it had done the year before—merely attempt to restore order.

They were called upon to surrender, and promised amnesty. A young priest, with forty odd leading men from Semal, obeyed the summons, laid down their arms and gave themselves up. They were kept two days in camp, and carefully questioned. If the Government had really been led into believing that there was a large army of insurgents in the mountains it was now undeceived. It also learned that the Armenians had about exhausted their ammunition in their conflict with the Kurds.

They were now urged to accept Islam. This they refused to do; and on the third day these men who had been guilty of defending themselves against the Kurds, and had surrendered in good faith to the Government, were brought bound to a pit

or trench that had been prepared, the soldiers were ordered to charge on them with their bayonets, and they were all cast, some of them half alive, into the pit and buried.

It could not have been long after this that the troops were brought into parade, and the Governor-General of Bitlis Province, Hasan Tahsin Pasha, went on to a hill above Gabegozan (Galin), produced the Firman of the Sultan, and, hanging it over his breast, had it read by a secretary Effendi. The gist of it was that the disaffected villages that were supposed to be in rebellion were to be wiped out. The Governor followed in a harangue, in which he told the troops and Kurds to spare no one or nothing; that they did this for their King and Prophet.

I must not forget to say that the villages in this district were taxpaying. Some of the men who surrendered brought tax receipts in their hands to show that they were loyal to the Government. It was only the Dalvoreeg villages and a few near them that for a number of years past had refused to pay taxes. The Shadak district was, moreover, exceptionally wealthy, especially the three leading villages. They were not on the line of travel, they gave the Government no more than its due, they would hold their own against all coming Kurds, giving a kind of tribute only to their own Kurdish lords. Some men are said to have owned 500 sheep. One man was noted for having 1,000. Carpets were extensively made and owned. There were numerous beehives.

Let me say right here, too, that by diligent inquiry I cannot learn that in those ten days of skirmish with the Kurds the latter offered to harm women and children. Even, subsequently, when urged on by the soldiers, and incited by their example, they did little in comparison with the soldiers. They rather devoted themselves to plunder, being such adepts at finding this, that even the treasures which the villagers had buried in their fields at ploughing time, these Kurds were able to discover in the grown-up wheat fields.

After things were over, some of these Kurds came to Armenian villages, and, with tears in their eyes described what had taken place, and said that though these Armenians were their natural enemies, having killed some of their number the previous year, yet they could not find it in their heart to harm women and children as the troops had done. I have been unable to get the exact date when the Sultan's Proclamation was read, but it must have been the second or third week in August.

Before relating what followed the order to massacre, I will give further particulars of the men who accompanied the priest and gave themselves up. After keeping them several days and getting all the information possible from them, on the third day they were brought to the trench that had been dug. One of their number was taken and urged to accept Islam. Upon refusing he was butchered before the others. Several were thus, by turn, treated before the others, and remained firm in their faith, before the remaining ones were charged upon with bayonets and cast into the trench. For the young priest, Der Hohanes Mardovan, special tortures were reserved. A number of soldiers charged with bayonets from opposite sides, held him in the air for some time, and then jerking out their bayonets, let him fall to the ground, hacked him to pieces, and threw him into the pit with the others. It is said that surviving relatives, after matters were over, exhumed what they could find of the body and buried it near the church. But of the massacre itself that followed, where shall I begin, and what shall I tell? It simply beggars all description. Occidentals of the nineteenth century cannot comprehend it. Still, I will try to give a few facts.

I have said that the Armenians had about exhausted their ammunition in their fight with the Kurds, and that they did not withstand the soldiers, though it is possible that later on, in hopeless desperation, some sold their lives as dear as possible. So the soldiers were now ordered to destroy unopposing. As the fate of those who had surrendered began to be known, some succeeded in escaping. It is said that one Bedo, of Galin, famous among the Kurds for healing wounds, was rescued by them with his whole household, though of course his property was all destroyed. Another story is told of a man, thinking to placate the soldiers, was able to set cream and honey before the whole battalion, but that the soldiers, after eating, destroyed him and all they could get hold of in his household; setting fire to houses, killing all, big and little of either sex, became general. Firing of guns and the six mountain pieces that had been brought there drowned the shrieks of women and children. Young men that were caught, were bound hands and feet, placed on the ground, covered with brush fodder, and burned to death. Others were hacked to pieces piecemeal. Some were tied to horses' tails and dragged over sharp stones and thorns till dead. The horses were stopped now and then to allow the victims to gain some consciousness of

acute pain. Even women were fastened by their hair to horses' tails and dragged in this way.

Doney's house in Shenik was filled with some fifty men, women, and children. This was set on fire by the soldiers. One boy who was trying to escape was caught on a bayonet and thrown back. Kerko, one of the richest men in the village, did not escape, as he would not desert his wife, who had been confined a night or two before. He was seized and brought before the Zelon Sheikh and the Commander of the troops. It seems he had wounded the Sheik's brother in the arm in the fight of the previous year. Now the soldiers and Kurds have their revenge. They take him to his house where his wife is lying, do before his eyes what no brute could be induced to do, and then placing the new-born babe on the mother's breast, cut them both in two. Kerko was then taken a long distance away and dispatched. His shirt, made of specially fine cloth, and identified by the one who sewed it, was subsequently found. It had some twenty bayonet and dagger rents in it.

Kerko's brother, Gazar's wife, an unusually handsome woman, was kept among the soldiers for several days and urged to change her faith, but as she persistently refused, she was made away with. Kerko, his wife and child, and two brothers' wives were killed from that house. The other seemed to have escaped.

In the village of Semal, containing some fifty to sixty houses, twelve were wholly exterminated. In Galin, from a household of fifty-two, only two escaped, an old man and his grandson.

You see the patriarchal system was much in vogue in these parts. It was not uncommon to have forty in a household. A trusted friend of ours who had travelled in these parts years ago, has said that he had counted twelve cradles in one house. Some hundred women and children were imprisoned in the Galin church for several days. The soldiers would take the women off and do their pleasure on them. One night they used the church for this purpose; the next day they slew all of them. The number was large enough to make a stream of blood flow over the threshold.

Six picked young women, two of them maidens, of that village, five from Hetink, and four from Aghpeg, were reserved by the soldiers. After keeping them for two days without succeeding in making them accept Islam, they butchered them. A soldier had taken to himself a girl 11 years old from Aghpig. Another soldier wanted to appropriate her, and when the first owner objected, shot her dead. An old woman with her grandson, 10 or 15 years old, came to camp and begged an officer to spare them. While she was yet speaking, a soldier thrust her through from behind with a bayonet. The officer reprimanded him, and said he would keep the boy for himself. He kept him for about a fortnight, and one day when he had sent the boy to fetch water from a spring, he heard the report of a gun, and starting up with a certain premonition, he saw sure enough his little servant writhing on the ground. As a rule, though, the officers forced the men to acts of cruelty from which they shrank.

A villager, whom I know well to be reliable, tells me that when the soldiers were returning from the mountains through Boolaneek, they impressed his cart to carry three sick soldiers to another village. As soon as they were going one of these remarked that God would surely visit vengeance on the Government for those things which they had recently done.

He then went on to tell this story :—

They saw a woman "with two souls" not far distant fleeing from a village. An officer ordered him to shoot, but he could not make up his mind to do such a thing, and fired twice, but purposely missed her. At this his superior angrily came up to him, gave him a cuff, snatched away his gun, and fired. The woman fell with a great shriek, the man ran up, and ripping her open, extracted a living child. The memory of that shriek, and that sight, the soldier went on to say, had made him sick ever since.

Such treatment of such women was a common occurrence, let alone the many who, while fleeing, fright compelled to cast forth their unborn young.

And testimony like that soldier's of being forced by their superiors to acts of cruelty was also common after their return. Some were known to start up deliriously in their sleep from the memory of what they had heard and witnessed. A number asked their Armenian acquaintances who the Nazarene Jesus was, and went on to explain that that was the person whom the women were calling on at the time of the slaughter.

As some of the soldiers were passing through a village street they find a child sitting there. Their superior orders a soldier to kill it. The soldier is bold enough to ask what harm the child had done to deserve death. The superior then wants to know

if the soldier had become a rebel "kâffer." Upon this the soldier flips the child over with the back of his sword, and they pass on.

A soldier finds two small boys behind a rock chewing brush leaves. He takes pity on them, and for two days shares his rations with them, but on his next visit to them finds them all butchered.

Another soldier succeeds in secreting and caring for six boys in a millet field for about a week, but comes one day to find their mangled bodies.

A Kurdish woman secretes twenty boys in a sheep fold, and carrying bread to them daily in her apron, throws it in to them, and hastily withdraws so as not to be observed. But one day the soldiers catch her with the bread, and succeed in finding the boys, whom they promptly put to the sword.

Some soldiers were scouring the brush in search of victims, and finding four boys brought them to the "Binbashi" (Colonel). After several days the mother, learning of their whereabouts, comes to camp, and upon seeing her boys faints for joy. When she comes to the "Binbashi" he deliberately has the children slain before her eyes.

A woman, related to a man I know well, had only time to get the cradle containing her child on her back and run—it is customary here to tie the children in their cradles. As she ran from a pursuing soldier, the cradle hit a tree and fell. There was no chance to stop. The soldier soon reached the cradle, bayoneted the child, and cutting away the bands that held it in, picked it out with the bayonet point and threw it away. The merciful growth of trees and bushes enabled the mother to escape.

The soldiers camped about the whole region. In Dalvoreeg alone about 150 tents were pitched. Early in the morning at bugle call the soldiers would set out in squads to hunt down the villagers. Those at a distance they would shoot down. They would shout, "There he runs!" and those who were in hiding among the bushes or stones would feel insecure, and attempt to move to another place, when they would be seen and shot. They would fire their guns among the bushes to scare up their "game." Mothers have been known to smother their children in their efforts to keep them quiet, so that they should not be discovered. On the steep sides of the raging river going by Dalvoreeg the soldiers would bayonet their victims, and throw them away down to the rushing river. Some, to escape death at the hands of the soldiers, threw themselves into the river. Bodies and pieces of bodies could be seen floating down. The river is said to have been red with blood for three days. Those that the soldiers captured they took to camp at the evening bugle call, and after dark would "sacrifice" them.

In most of these cases where they succeeded in slaughtering the people in crowds it was by first beguiling them into surrendering. In one case a soldier says that some 400 women came and threw themselves at the Commander's feet and implored mercy. He gave them over to the soldiers to do with them as they liked, and afterwards had them killed.

I will give but one more instance of this kind. A young priest in Dalvoreeg persuaded seventy men to go with him and give themselves up. One young man could not be induced to accompany them, and ran off to some eminence to watch the result. When these men reached the camp the priest was put into a tent and the others were marched off by the soldiers to some gulch, where they were set to work digging. When sufficient earth had been thrown up, these men were all hacked to pieces and thrown in, or as the witness expressed it, "were cut up like tobacco" and cast in. To defile this human mass, a dog was cut up and spread over it, after which it was covered with earth. When these soldiers returned to camp, the priest, who was unconscious of what had taken place, was taken out of the tent, strung to a beam, and cut to pieces, each piece being thrown as far as could be in a different direction. The robe and cap this priest used at services were sold in an Armenian village by some Kurds. The robe was identified by a brother of the priest by a small rip in the back. It is now in my possession.

At another place a priest was disposed of in this way: A chain was put about his neck, and two soldiers pulled at it from opposite sides. When he was almost strangled, and fell down senseless, they would let up on the chain till he came to, when the same operation would be repeated. This was done several times, till he was almost lifeless, then several bayonets were planted upright, the priest was tossed up and let fall on them.

In all it is said that six or seven priests were killed, nearly all of them horrible deaths. One had a very narrow escape. He was pursued by soldiers, but succeeded in getting into a reservoir where water is collected for irrigation. He kept his body under water, and by putting his head in the outlet, could raise his head enough

to breathe without being seen. He stayed for two days before he ventured to escape. Of course, during that time he was without food.

There are a good many thrilling stories of narrow escapes. One young man tied a number of gold pieces in his stocking before setting out to run away. He is caught by three or four Kurds, who are about to kill him, when they think it is a pity to spoil his clothes, and proceed to strip him first. As they take the stockings off, the gold pieces scatter right and left, and as the Kurds scramble after them the young fellow skips off.

Another man threw himself down as if dead among a heap of slain, and though he got a number of cuts, he succeeded in getting off in the dead of night.

Then there are the numerous accounts of the people coming out from their hiding-places at night in search of food, getting grapes from the vineyards on the mountain sides, getting grain from the fields, rubbing it in their hands and eating it that way, and for the children trying to make flour of it by crushing it between stones, not daring to make fires lest the flame and smoke would betray their whereabouts; how groups of villagers—men, women, and children—by the scores and hundreds, would be found hidden in caves by Kurds and troops, and those who could not be taken away for their own use were dispatched.

Let me say right here that all the villages that resisted the Kurds even were those chief villages I have mentioned in the Shadak region, the Dalvoreeg group, and a few in the immediate vicinity. All the rest, so far as I can learn, were attacked without offering any resistance.

I must speak of one instance where a village was raided by Kurds and troops, and some of these, on their return from the pursuit of the villagers, find a blind man intently listening to see what he could divine as to the result. Finally he ventures to ask how things turned out. The Kurds, who are familiar with his dialect, pretend to be Armenians, and say that they have succeeded in driving the Kurds off. At this a smile of joy passes over the blind man's face, whereupon he is stabbed to death.

Since this will not see print, but is merely intended to give you a few facts by which you can form some idea of what has taken place, I will say that the soldiers often mutilated the bodies of their victims and left them with *pudenda in ore*. An old priest that was cut to pieces had his eyeballs put *in ano*.

This is the way the Turkish soldiers amused themselves. A child was tied firmly underneath a dog. A cow's stomach was blown up and several walnuts were put inside. This was tied to the dog's tail, and he was let loose to run madly about with the large bouncing, rattling football behind, till finally both dog and child die. I know this is very hard to believe, but I have it from such independent, direct sources that I cannot regard it a pure fabrication. Let us only hope that it was not true that the child was alive when tied to the dog.

The 25th August was signalized by greater slaughter. We know this date because, as if to commemorate the event, a wonderful meteor burst from the sky that evening.

Friday, the 31st August, the anniversary of the Sultan's accession, was also a day of great execution. The troops and Kurds were especially harangued to fight for the honour of their Prophet and King. And so the bloody work went on. The whole region was fairly alive with the invading forces. When the ammunition of the Kurds gave out, the Government gave them seven cases alone. Military men will be able to tell you how many rounds a case weighing about 150 lbs. would approximately contain. From this we alone get some idea how many Kurds either owned or were provided with breech-loaders. It is said that at least half of the Bakrankee tribe had such guns.

About the middle of the district between Dalvoreeg and Shadak is a large mountain, Andoke by name. By the description, it is evidently an extinct volcano, for at the summit there is a large bowl-shaped hollow. There are precipitous cliffs about its base. It is wooded about it and part way up its sides. With plenty of ammunition and provisions, a small force could almost render it impregnable. The inhabitants of a number of villages had fled to this mountain at the beginning of hostilities, taking what of their flocks they could, and their number was constantly being added to as people escaped from the invading forces. This mountain was surrounded by troops and Kurds. The latter for days provoked the exhaustion of what little ammunition the Armenians had left, but none of the invaders seemed to know the path of approach to the summit. Finally, an "agha" of the Bakrankee tribe, Amar by name, son of Gako, was found who knew the way, and showed it to the troops and Kurds. For this service Kurds have repeatedly said that Amar

received a decoration from the Sultan, though I have not been able to see any one who had actually seen the decoration.

Very early one morning the forces steal up the sides of Andoke. They almost surround the rim of the great hollow before the people gathered below are aware. Who can describe that despairing cry of agony, proceeding from thousands of throats, as the poor people find themselves hedged in? The cry is heard by those at a distance below the mountain, as is also the bugle giving the order to charge. At first the crowd is thinned out by volleys of bullets, and then the bayonet and sword do the rest. It would be a miracle if any escaped. The number is said to have been from 1,000 to 5,000. Let us make a conservative deduction and call it 2,000 victims. The bodies were heaped together with wood between, saturated with kerosene, and set afire, as was done in most other cases where the people were killed in crowds, and there was no convenient wheat-pit or natural trench or gully into which to throw them. Those who were killed here and there among the rocks and bushes elsewhere, were left unburied. The weather and birds did the rest. The crows, which used to be so common in Moush and vicinity, had all deserted this year for more lucrative employment. When the wind was in the right direction the stench was perceptible on the mountains within sight of Moush.

The attack on Andoke probably took place the first week in September, or possibly on the last day of August, the Sultan's fête day of which I had spoken. This was practically the end of the campaign. The soldiers still searched here and there for stray victims, but the special effort was to find Moorad Effendi and his companions, as well as the arsenal which they were supposed to have furnished.

At last a villager was found, who, under threat of being tortured and killed, was induced to reveal the cave where Moorad and ten companions were hid. These were taken prisoners. A soldier has said that when Moorad was caught a salute of fifty guns was fired. Seven breech-loading guns and several bombs were found with these eleven men. Some no doubt had escaped with such guns in their possession, and others had hid them before attempting to escape, like a man I have seen; but I very much doubt if there were more than 100 or 200 such guns in the hands of the Armenians during the conflict. And as to the hand bombs, I cannot learn that any were actually thrown, though some Kurds have said that occasionally something would burst in their midst and kill twenty men at once.

I am inclined to put this on a par with the imagination which regarded that meteor as an electric rocket sent from Persia, or the stories that used to be current that Andoke was being filled by troops and cannon brought by balloons. Sixteen others were taken prisoners here and there, as if for the sake of having some prisoners to show. One of these was a mere boy, 12 or 15 years old. In fact, most of them were mere striplings. These were imprisoned in a church for a number of days. They were not even allowed to go out to relieve nature, and the guards tried to force them to pollute the baptismal font.

Let us dispose of the Kurds before going on. It seems the Ruskotlee tribe was late in getting to the scene of action, and found things so thoroughly swept before them, that rather than go back empty, they went out of the way and attacked the village of Marneeg, back of Havadvoreek, and took away 1,600 sheep. The people complained to the Government, and soldiers were sent, who recovered 600 of them. Aside from spoils in sheep, cattle, and goods, the Kurds were especially active in taking captive women and children. The Bakranlee tribe alone, it is said, took off 400 women beside children. For all the women and children that were taken off by Kurds and troops, especially the officers of the latter, I think 1,000 a safe estimate. The Sheikh of Zeelon received one-eighth of the spoils taken by the tribes under his control. His share was 860 sheep and goats, 40 mules, 33 choice cows, and 3 or 4 mares; this in live stock, besides large quantities of clothing, carpets, dishes, &c. The Sheikh claimed that out of his 14,000 or 15,000 men, 1,200 had been killed. He also said that 150 soldiers had been killed. A Kurdish "agha," sitting by, exclaimed, "What are you saying? 400 or 500 must have perished." Their estimate was based on the number of cartridges, belts, guns, &c., that they had taken in their spoils.

The Government does not seem to admit that any soldiers were killed. If 150 to 200 were killed, I have no doubt that the large majority were killed while fighting in disguise in company with the Kurds. Of other Kurds not under Zeelon Sheikh, probably some 300 fell. So that of the attacking force less than 2,000 lost their lives. The 800 "Hamedia" horsemen were held in reserve at Moush. I cannot learn that any of them were in the attack. The riderless horses that the Harsanlees led back belonged to those who probably died of cholera. Those who assert that

"Hamedia" were in the mountains probably mistook the Bakranlee horsemen as such. I cannot be sure that these latter were organized as "Hamedia," but it is possible that flags were presented to these as well as to the others by the Government.

It is said that a month or two after the Kurds had withdrawn, the Moushir (General) summoned the Zeelon Sheikh to Erzingian, and asked him what he meant by the mischief he had done in the Sassoon district. The Sheikh produced his Firman, at which the Moushir was very much agitated, and did not rest content till by dextrous management he had succeeded in getting the paper and giving in its place another, guaranteeing the Sheik immunity.

I have not had the means of satisfying myself as to the truth of this story; but as to whether the Kurds had oral and written instructions—something more than mere permission—to pillage and burn and kill, I have not the least particle of doubt. The fact is, the Government hoped to finish the business by means of the Kurds, and in 1893 had a body of Kurds attack what it considered the centre of the trouble—Dalvoreeg. When that failed (the Tahsin received a high decoration for having restored order) it was planned in 1894 to clean out the whole region by bringing hordes of Kurdes. When these did not succeed in making proper headway it was thought a good opportunity for stamping out the whole of a remote, unknown region by troops, while Europe had its eyes fixed on China and Japan.

I do not believe any one can give a more satisfactory explanation than this. The last troops to come were the three picked taboors from Erzingian, or 2,400 men, who came by the direct route viâ Bingol; they were infected with cholera, and many died on the march, some say 300. Of course they brought the plague to Moush, and as a result as many as 1,200 people died in the town and immediate vicinity. It is said that the fatalities among the troops alone was as high as seventy in one day. The Moushir himself followed soon after, and, taking some of the troops, went to the mountains. At this point accounts conflict, but I think the weight of evidence goes to show that he found matters practically at an end, that he was much taken back to find what had been done, and that he really prevented matters from going any further.

It seems evident that four other villages had been blacklisted by Tahsin for pillage, and possibly for fire and sword. Havadvoreek, on the brow of the mountain, two hours from Moush, Ardonk, Kerse, and Vartanese, in the north-eastern part of the plain; and it is not unlikely that a general ravage of the plain might have taken place, unless Zekki Pasha had come in person. Tahsin had avoided seeing him by going off to Ginge shortly before his arrival. It is said that Zekki Pasha called him to Moush to explain himself, but that he did not obey. At any rate, it is true that he did not see the Mushir, and went to Akhlat without touching Moush. From the time the first additional troops went to the mountains to the time all, excepting those who were left to see about the disposal of bodies, were withdrawn, is said to be fifty days. But the time of active fighting of troops was probably not more than three weeks: the last two in August and the first in September.

It seems pretty well established that thirty-two villages were burned and the inhabitants massacred. By counting hamlets of two or three houses, and the groups of houses used in the summer when the people are high in the mountains with their sheep, the number might be made to appear forty, or even forty-eight, as some have asserted.

As to the number of Armenians killed, it is practically impossible to get a close estimate. The Kurds went away with the idea that they had left no one living in the burned villages. It was the merciful growth of trees and bushes, and the numerous caves in the region, that enabled so many to escape as did. We have noticed what large households were common in that region, but, of course, there is no accurate census, and even the Government Returns are below the truth, as it is so common for the villagers to conceal their male children so as to avoid the poll tax. It would especially be hard to find out the population of those villages that for a number of years had paid no taxes whatever. Besides this, since there was serious talk of a foreign Commission of Inquiry, there has been a deliberate attempt to alter the registry records of the region.

In the book of statistics, &c., published about two years ago, Sassoon is down for 119 villages, containing a population of 16,535, of whom 3,187 are Armenians, 1,617 being males. Seven mosques, one school, one minaret, and two churches are reported. The Khoolp district is stated to be sixty hours in circumference; to contain 118 villages, 3,152 houses, 9,993 population, of whom 2,880 are Armenians, 1,555 being males. Five mosques and four churches and monasteries are reported. There

is an obvious mistake as to houses and population. The houses should be less or the population more. The figures for the Shadak district are not given separately, so I can make them out. There are glaring—I cannot call them anything else than misrepresentations, in these figures.

The whole district of Khoolp, for instance, is said to have 2,880 Armenian population, whereas the sub-district of Dalvores, with several villages near it, would undoubtedly make up this sum. It is a pet suspicion of mine that that book, the first and last of its kind, and published about the time the Kurdish Chiefs were first called here and directed to attack that district, had a distinct purpose—that of showing a population which would be the result of several years of special harassing by the Kurds. But perhaps I am mistaken.

It is said that the Moush "Mutessarif" (Governor) represented that 10,000 had been slain in his report. He was soon after removed to Kergute, and has since, I understand, been dismissed. It is also said that the Vergue Mudir, or Superintendent of Revenues, in this province, estimated from his own figures that more than 10,000 had been slain; that Tahsin got angry at this, and had the report made out 2,000. Though of little weight, let us hear what some of the participants say.

One soldier said he had killed five, and that was the least of any one. Another soldier got angry in the market, and said they had slain a thousand thousand in Dalvoreeg, and they would next turn on this city if they did not look out. A Kurd, telling the story in the bazaars when the rain was streaming down from the roof, said, "You can count these drops, but you could not count the number of those we killed." I think the truth is not far from 10,000; 6,000 I consider a safe minimum estimate, and should not feel like contradicting one who asserted that 16,000 had perished. It is pretty certain that 800 were killed in the large village of Galin. It is true that in the other villages near by, containing more houses, a larger proportion was killed, so that 1,800 for three to five villages is a low estimate.

There is good reason for believing that 2,200 were killed in Dalvoreeg and vicinity. Then about 2,000 on Mount Andoke. This leaves out of account a good many villages in Sassoon proper. I should put the average number in each house at ten, if not fifteen. There were probably more houses containing twenty inmates than there were of those containing five. Then there were about as many villages plundered as there were burned.

The village of Maklink bought off fire and sword by paying 1,000 liras, but was thoroughly plundered. The village of Pouree, of about thirty houses, was plundered and all but eight horses deserted. Hosuer, containing twenty houses, was partly deserted last year, and the rest fled this year; taking together those who were slain, taken captive, rendered homeless by having their villages burned, or reduced to abject poverty by being robbed, I think 30,000 would be a low estimate. The region desolated must contain not less than 200 square miles, when the uneven surface is taken into account.

In the official paper published here, it was recently stated that the Government had to send some soldiers into that region to catch Moorad Effendi and 120 rebel companions. Now I will go on to say that to catch these "rebels" from 10,000 to 15,000 troops, regular and reserve, and from 15,000 to 20,000 Kurds, or a total armed force of at least 30,000 men, were concentrated on that region, with from twenty to thirty mountain pieces, and large quantities of ammunition, including petroleum.

We have seen the result of such an expedition, but we must not omit to take into account the great drain on the land through which such large bodies of men marched, for they practically forraged on the Armenians without any compensation, and you will not fail to put the ravages of the cholera to the direct credit of this expedition. It is said that even the 7th Army Corps was moved up as far as Mosul on its way here.

As a sidelight, let me mention the fact that at the village of Tseronk, on the plain about 9 miles directly north of Moush, where saltpetre abounds, and where the making of gunpowder had been prohibited for the last four or five years, this year, under the superintendence of officers, 30 or 40 hotmuns was made for the Government and taken to Moush. Well, after things had quieted down in the mountains, the Government got a number of survivors together in Moush and tried to get them to sign a statement saying that the Kurds had done them great harm, and that the Government had kindly sent troops to restore order, for which they were thankful, &c. They were promised money with which to rebuild, and seed for the spring, besides supplies for the winter, if they would sign the paper, but the memory of what the soldiers had done was too fresh to permit them to sign such a statement, and neither reward nor threat availed. Then the Government went on to do something else. It got up an Address of thankfulness

to the Sultan for his benign reign, that the Dalvoreeg disturbers had got their deserts, and expressing satisfaction that order had been restored, &c. By misrepresentation and compulsion, signatures were got to this in Genge, Moush, Boolaneek, and Akhlat districts. I know of persons in Akhlat who were imprisoned and threatened before they would consent to affix their seals to it. The effort to get the Notables here to sign it failed, much to the chagrin of the Vali, who had come here from his summer quarters in Akhlat the last part of September. But the Address was wired to Constantinople, and you may have seen it in some of the papers.

At this time Moush was under strict quarantine, so it was hard to get any news outside. Besides, travellers on their way to Constantinople for work were turned back. It is said that as many as 1,000 poor villagers, whom the earthquake had attracted to Constantinople to find work, were turned back from Trebizond and Erzeroum. Fifty from a single village east of us were turned back. The aggravating part of it was that these poor villagers would spend the weeks of time, and the money, regular charge and extra fees, to get out their teskérés, or passports, when the officials that issued them knew that they would be turned back. I could tell you the story of a woman whose husband had sent on money for her to join him in Constantinople; how she was turned back from Trebizond, and on her way back was captured by Kurds, and taken off to their village, where she still remains. But these were not the only means the Government took to keep news from leaking out. Mr. Hallward, the British Vice-Consul at Van, had been directed to go to Moush. On account of a dog-bite on the leg, he was detained, and did not get round till the first week in October. When he was on his way there several sub-officers and zaptiehs were sent to Tadvan to meet him, and cordially urge him to come to Bitlis, not to expose himself to the cholera by going to Moush, &c. Of course he paid no attention to them, and followed his orders. But during the two weeks he spent in the Moush region he was positively denied any access to the desolated region. His movements were carefully watched, and everything done to prevent any one from seeing him. He had hardly been seated at one village when a zaptieh came post-haste after him, and had all the villagers who were in the house with him driven out. Thus the Government tried to foil every attempt to get information, but he would be a poor Briton if in a fortnight he could not get hold of some facts in spite of the Government. The Mutessarif told him that there had been trouble between the Armenians and Kurds, and the Government had been obliged to call in troops to restore order. He admitted that some of the troops had been guilty of "adapsuzluck" (shamelessness). Had Mr. Hallward been able to go to the mountains, he would have found things at their worst; in fact, he would not have been able to go far for the stench; for the detachment of soldiers left there to cover up traces of the massacre had not accomplished much yet, though they got Kurds to assist them, and what surviving Armenians they could impress into the service. It is said that some of those twenty-seven prisoners were men who had been impressed into this work of burying the dead, and not being given anything to eat, had attempted to get away, and were caught. I have seen a reliable man who visited the three villages of Shenerg, Senal, and Galin after Mr. Hallward left Moush. He went with some other villagers, as if to pick thorn-apples that abound in that region, and was therefore not molested by the soldiers that were stationed there. Many bodies and bones were still exposed. He saw the burned church where those women had been butchered, and the dried-up stream of blood that had flowed over the threshold was distinctly visible. In Galin he saw seven men—two of them wounded—and about 100 women and children. They were living in kind of booths they had made near the charred ruins of their houses. In Shenerg he saw five or six men, and about thirty women and children. In Senal he saw no men, but about twenty women and children. Of course, there were other survivors that had fled here and there.

The Government tried to get them together and send them back to rebuild their villages, promising them supplies for the winter. Quite a number were got together, but as winter came on and there was nothing for them to live on, they crowded about Moush, and finally the Government distributed them among the half-famished villages of the plain, taking a receipt from the Head of each village for the number intrusted to his village. There are about 500 of these refugees on the plain, most of them women and children. There are but few able-bodied men among them. Most of them are nearly naked, and are huddling among the stables, with hardly a thing to lie on or to put over them at night, and barely keeping soul and body together on the scanty rations their poor hosts are able to give them. A poor fellow, Ghazar

by name, from Galin, found his way here, and I, with others, contributed towards getting him cloth and clothing. Some of the money that was given him he invested in cotton, and the rest, some 40 piastres, he tied in his clothing, and started back to the village where he was assigned. On the way, near Godne, he was met by some soldiers, who took the cloth and money away from him. He said that he belonged to a household of thirty, and that only three men had been killed.

Well, let us go back to Mr. Hallward. He had ten days' of quarantine at Azvood before coming here. He got here Friday e.m., the 28th October, and was Mr. Cole's guest. Tahsin Pasha had found it convenient to start for his annual visit to Sert several days before Mr. Hallward was expected, and left the Maktubgee Acting Governor. The Chief of Police soon came up to present compliments; said they did not expect him to arrive so soon; that they were getting a place ready for him; hoped he was comfortable where he was, &c.

That very night some five police and soldiers in disguise were ordered to patrol about all the approaches to our premises, so that no one could have a chance to see the Consul. Mr. Cole's servant, obliged to go home late one night, was seized and taken to the Maktubgee, where the pocket account book he had by him was examined. This cordon of spies was not thought enough, and, I think it was the second day, a policeman was sent as a great favour to be with and "wait on him." I accompanied him on horseback rides about the town, and we were invariably followed by a spy. No one dared to come anywhere near him.

On Sunday those who passed through the outside gate to go to church were noted down by the spies. There is no other way to get to church except by that court into which Mr. Cole's court also leads. Mr. Hallward, not knowing Armenian, naturally did not attend service, but spies were ready to note what he said, or with whom he spoke, had he been there.

On Monday one of our ladies was grossly insulted on the street, while she was coming down to my house, by a soldier. This was the first time such a thing had happened to us in the city.

Tuesday, the 30th, Mr. Hallward started for Van by the route north of Lake Van, since there was quarantine by the shorter route.

Before leaving town we went together to the Acting Governor, and Mr. Hallward reported the case of insult. Of course summary punishment was promised, but though the punishment for such an offence is three months' confinement, I could never get evidence that the soldier had been confined a single day. I went for about an hour out of the city to see Mr. Hallward on his way. On the way we met a body of zaptiehs bringing in eight to twelve Sassoon prisoners. One of them, tied on a horse, I took to be Mourad Effendi.

The day after the Consul left a squad of zaptiehs were sent out to the villages near the lake, and where he spent the night, to see if no petitions had been handed him. I have pretty good evidence that there was a plan in some way to get his papers away from him, but by going directly to Elgevas, instead of back to Mount Sepan, as he had planned, he got into Van territory before they had time to put their plan into execution. The zaptiehs who went from here with him to Akhlat, on their return to Dzoghag, where he spent the night, gave a good deal of trouble to the men they suspected of having talked with him the previous night, and only let them alone after they had received some kind of bribe.

In the city, as I said, practically no Armenian had any chance to see the Consul. But some of the Notables, who knew his Dragoman, Nushan Effendi, were imprudent enough to invite him to a feast.

Probably in the course of their conversation they intimated that they were now lying on flowery beds of ease. At any rate, the Government imprisoned a number of these Notables while the Consul was still here, and after he had gone a number more were imprisoned, in reality, for having been suspected of complaining of the Government to the Consul.

About this time the Bitlis Armenians, driven to desperation, came out boldly and sent a long complaint by wire to Constantinople against Tahsin in reference to the blackmail he had extorted from them. Copies of this were sent besides to the Grand Vizier, to other Heads of Departments, and the Patriarchate. No attention seemed to be paid to this, and they telegraphed again. To make it doubly sure, a despatch was sent out of the vilayet and wired from there. Still no response. Finally they got word from the Acting Patriarch that their Petition had been duly presented, and would receive attention.

In November I went over to Van, and got back on the 21st. During my absence more of the Armenian Notables had been imprisoned. On the next day Avedis Gageosen, more than thirty years a leading Protestant brother, and a member of the "Mejlis" (Council), was imprisoned. A low Armenian young man, who had a grudge against him, and was in prison for forgery and for giving the Government false information, accused him of having been in communication with Sassoon. No attention would have been paid to such testimony had not Avedis been noted down as one who went through that court on his way to church that Sunday Mr. Hallward was here. As a matter of fact, however, Avedis never had a word with him, or even saw him.

That very night (Thursday, the 22nd November) Tahsin Pasha returned from Sert. It had been said that he had offered his resignation, pleading that he could no longer manage things here. His resignation was not accepted, and it seems as if he were given full power to do as he saw fit. It was evident that the whole Government was at one in its effort to throttle the Armenians. Though another telegram was sent, yet no attention was paid to it. I think in all five such telegrams were sent, some costing as much as 17*l.* or 18*l.* One the Post Office Mudir refused to send after taking the money and giving a receipt. The Lay Acting Archbishop was in prison, and he pretended that he could not send the telegram without his seal. Those who had been active in sending these complaints were imprisoned. The whole number of Notables imprisoned at one time reached twenty, I think. At this time an effort was made by torturing the Sassoon prisoners to testify that these Armenian Notables had been in complicity with them.

In the official article to which I referred it was stated that six of the twenty-seven prisoners had died of cholera. You can set it down at once that the "cholera" was nothing else than the brutal treatment they had received. Three or four died in prison. One had been terribly beaten on the way here. So far as I can make out, there are no more than eighteen of them now. Poor fellows, with hardly a rag on, put down in a damp, filthy dungeon, half-starved, often cruelly beaten; such is the lot of political prisoners.

I shall not describe prison life now, but will say in passing that flogging, pincers, the branding-iron, making prisoners stand for several hours barefoot on the snow, are not uncommon tortures, and there are actually those who have had tacks driven into their heads. But I will just mention what I know, on good authority, Mourad Effendi had to endure at one time. They wanted to get him to testify that the Bitlis Notables had backed him up, &c.; that some foreign country, especially England, had sent him to Sassoon to stir matters up; they wanted him to reveal the chemical they had used to develop sympathetic writing, and also where he got the bombs that were found in his possession.

To elicit the desired testimony and information, he was first taken up to the Police Office, where for eight or ten hours he was pinched, and hairs, especially those of his moustache, were pulled out. He was then taken down to the dungeon and made to stand up for thirty-six hours. Whenever, through exhaustion or drowsiness, he staggered or fell over, the sentinel that was placed over him would bring him to his senses by cruelly hitting him with his gun-stock. During all this time he was given no food or water. That was only one time and one form, but tortures were more or less continuous for him and the others. But the efforts to get the testimony wanted were uniformly unsuccessful. Then the Government tried to divide the Notables against one another by promising freedom to those who would tell on the others. This also failed.

It was the first part of December when a large number of zaptiehs were summoned and dispatched to Khoot, the district east of Sassoon, with a message to the leading Kurds something like this: During the present circumstances take a special care that there be no disturbances in your region.

I don't know what you will infer from this, but my inference is that the Government had some understanding with the Kurds about plundering or burning Armenian villages, but the make-up of some Commission of Inquiry led them at once to give this ambiguous countermand.

On the 20th December Mourad and his companions were brought up for trial. Mourad Effendi said in Court that his real name was Hampartsoon Boogian, 31 years old, a native of Hal-din, in the Vilayet of Adana; had studied medicine at the School in Constantinople; had been in Athens and Geneva; that he had come to these parts to teach the Armenian villagers primarily two things, one, not to sell their daughters

in marriage, and the other to stand up for their rights against the Kurds. He admitted that he had given breech-loading guns to his companions that they might defend themselves against the Kurds, since they could never get redress through the Government. His five companions were asked if Moorad Effendi had not promised them foreign aid, especially that of England. Four of them denied it, the fifth said that he had not heard him personally, but had been told so by some one else that he had said so.

Suggestive questions about England were often introduced by the President of the Court.

Whenever they made any reference to the massacre they were abruptly shut off with the order to say no more than they were asked. One of the prisoners, a shepherd, said that the Kurds came and drove off his flock; that he ran to the village to give the alarm, and when he got there he found the people lying dead in the streets. He was there interrupted.

Another man would not be shut up at once, and pathetically pleaded, "Why don't you write it down, scribe? Oh, write it! For years we have put up with the Kurds. This year when they attacked us we tried to defend ourselves. Then the soldiers came and killed our wives and children, though we offered them no resistance. I managed to escape and flee to a mountain, and was afterwards captured and brought here. What have I been brought here for?"

The trial lasted about a week, and then the verdict given. Dr. Harnipartsoon and his companion, Holmes, were condemned to death, two were acquitted—the boy whom I have mentioned and a priest who was not really from that region. The nearest I can get to exactness as to the others is seven to fifteen years' imprisonment and seven to five years.

During the trial letters purporting to be addressed to Tahsin Pasha by the Mutessarifs of Genge and Moush, and the Mushir, Zekki Pasha, were read. They said that for the last eight years the Armenians of the Sassoon region had given great trouble to their Kurdish neighbours, had attacked and robbed their villages, kidnapped their women, killed some of their men, had hung crosses from the necks of faithful Moslems, and desecrated their mosques, &c.; that the Kurds, unable to endure it any longer, had finally engaged in fights with the Armenians; that they (the writers) at last had been obliged to send two "bodooks" (companies, 60 or 100 men) to quell the disturbance and bring the guilty to justice.

Let me here say what I consider the truth of the matter. The second week of last June I was at Farkin, about six hours south of the disaffected region. I then heard of disturbances in the Dalvoreeg district. They had been in a state of siege practically for a year, and their crops had been trodden down by the troops the previous year. In these straits the villagers robbed caravans of wheat going from Diarbekir region to Moush. It is probable that they attacked the flock of some Kurds, and would not let some of the tribes drive through their territory. It may be in some of these affrays that some Kurds were wounded, but I very much doubt if any Kurd was killed, since we have seen what the killing of two Kurds in the Sheikh district led to.

Here is a good opportunity for me to tell what I know about a revolutionary movement.

As I intimated at the beginning, there was such a movement incited by such men from the outside as Damatian and Dr. Harnpartsoon. Armenians in Russia were in communication with the region, and those in Persia too it is said. A witness has told me that, before these troubles began, he saw a body of sixty armed foreign men leaving that district for Russia. Dr. Harnpartsoon was at Khnoos for two years on the line of communication. A good, reliable friend of mine met him while he was in disguise in that region. Harnpartsoon wanted to know how he stood, and when informed that he was neutral in political matters, he remarked, "Oh, he is a living corpse!" The winter following the capture of Daghnatian, Dr. Harnpartsoon went to Dalvoreeg and was the leader in the movement. Funds, almost entirely from Russia, were collected and expended on preparations. It is possible the noted iron mine in Dalvoreeg was made use of. The breech arrangements for guns were brought from Russia, and a skilled workman had come who could make over the flint-locks of the villagers into breech-loaders. It is said that this man was at the Arkelots Vank, on his way to Moosh to procure iron for his craft, when the troubles broke out, and he did not return to the mountain. It cannot be denied that preparations for some kind of an outbreak were being made, but these could not be completed inside a year at the least.

So far as I can make out from their plans, when all was ready, there was to be a simultaneous outbreak at Zeitoun, Sassoon, and on the Persian and Russian frontiers.

Some of the villagers in other parts had arms concealed to help in the general commotion.

The Sassoon people made an attack on Moosh, surprised the small garrison, seized the arms and ammunition, and had gone on getting many followers from the Armenians of the plain.

However much we may deprecate such a plan, and consider it foolishly futile, still let us confess that European attention would not have been turned to the slow but sure process of extermination that was going on, by means of irregular organized Kurds, and by direct official oppression in the prisons and out of them, unless some such great sacrifice were made at once as that which has just been made at Sassoon. These plans have been desperate attempts to raise the distress signal, that Europe might rescue them before they were entirely lost.

Let me say here that by diligent inquiry I cannot discover that the alleged aggressive policy of the Hunchagists of provoking vengeance by first attacking the Kurds has been as yet put in practice in this whole region. Occasionally the depredations of the Kurds have been resisted, and in one or two instances official arrest has been resisted when it was known that imprisonment and trial in these Courts practically meant death.

It is now more than three weeks since I began writing this. I found that there was no reliance whatever to be put on the Turkish post. We have positive evidence that even a sealed registered letter that we had sent to Mr. Shipley, the British Commissioner at Moush, was opened. So I have been waiting for a chance to get this over to Moush, and have it sent on in their independent post. In the meanwhile, I have been adding to this in my leisure moments.

I have tried to deliver a plain, unvarnished tale, *sine ira et studio*. I have tried to be as cool as the circumstances would permit, and have taken no further pains than to get good facts in their proper place. As to the style, the *sine studio* will speak for itself. I have simply tried to talk with you, often, I fear, in even a careless manner.

You will excuse the length, I hope, for I have been following the example you set me of collecting more material than one is likely to use, that there might be a wider range of choice. I hope this will not reach you too late for any use—hard fate has been against my getting it to you when I would like.

Before I quit you may like to have me bring down to date. 12th February. The Turkish Commission was promptly met by a good delegation of officials sent on from here beyond Moush. It was with difficulty that petitioners could get access to them, and as few Turkish scribes would write for them, many of the Petitions were made out in Armenian. It is said that one Sassoonlee ran the gauntlet of the guards set about the house, got in, handed over his Armenian Petition, and was given an audience by Abdullah Pasha. After he left the house he was sought with a view to imprisonment, but he escaped.

The story here current as to Abdullah's recall is as follows:—

He was called to the wire, but when he got there he found that he had left the cypher key back in some village where he had spent the night. For this carelessness the Government immediately recalled him, and he started back the next morning. The remaining three practically did nothing after he left. Yes, they did do a little something shortly before the European Commissioners arrived. The refugees that were in Moush and the near villages were sent further out into the plain. The Government stationed men in the villages, especially in Boolanook, to see that people did not go to and fro. For a time a system of passes was instituted to go even from one village to another.

They, I say—the Government is at one in the matter—tried to get the Moush Armenians to sign a paper to the effect that nothing had occurred at Sassoon; that they were satisfied and thankful for their present condition; that they protested against the coming of foreigners, and preferred to adjust any difficulties that might arise between them and their Government without any foreign interference. This scheme did not meet with any great success. A way they tried to get the seals of villagers to a similar statement was by sending out pieces of blank paper by a zaptieh, who would inquire of the chief men if there was any cholera in the village. They would say no, and would thereupon be asked to affix their seals to the paper, which could be filled in as they chose subsequently. This, also, was not a brilliant success,

for they had scented the foreign Commission, and there were those who would warn the people from falling into any such traps.

In Bitlis the pressure was made a good deal heavier. Having failed to get the Sassoon prisoners to testify against the imprisoned Notables, or to get them to testify against one another, Tahsin thought he would try another tack. He had been seizing our mails, and having articles in reference to this subject translated, and was pretty well convinced that Mr. Hallward and we were chiefly responsible for these Sassoon stories gaining credence in the outside world. Now he had Addresses like the above of thankfulness, &c., prepared, with the addition of saying that Mr. Hallward was responsible for disturbances in Dalvoreeg. The prisoners were promised liberation if they would sign such a statement, and were threatened with the life sentence if they would not. There were a great variety of these that were successively brought to them to sign, and they as often refused to do so. One of these which was intended to be wired to Constantinople I succeeded in getting a copy of, and will try to give a literal translation:—

"Making it known that we have kept ourselves aloof from the vain thoughts of foreign satanic tempters, who by hostile, inflaming words have tried to upset the thoughts of loyal subjects, living under the shadow of our world-preserving Government, and that the complaints of certain unbalanced simple ones are altogether apart from any truth. We also declare ourselves to be constantly praying for His Majesty our Sovereign."

You see by signing such a statement they would not only incriminate Mr. Hallward and us, but would, at the same time, be taking back the complaint they had signed against Tahsin.

Those out of prison who had signed those first complaints against him were now brought, and were forced, quite a number of them, to sign statements retracting what they had said before. One brave young fellow stood up like a man to what he had at first signed, and went to prison for it. Most of those who had been forced to retract got a telegram ready to send to Constantinople saying how they had been forced to sign such papers by the Government, but the telegram would not be accepted at the office.

At this time the ward tax-gatherers were called and their seals were taken away from them so that they could sign no more papers for the people. Things were in this state when word came that Tahsin had been deposed, 28th January. This brought quite a relief, for Tahsin was not only using these forcible measures to vindicate himself, but was also trying to stir up the fanatical element to violence against the Armenians. He was also stirring up an anti-foreign feeling. We finally became pretty well satisfied that he was even plotting against our lives. I have it on very good authority that in Government Councils one leading man proposed that we should be imprisoned. Tahsin said that they had no right to do that, but said that if they could only find something in the papers about the Sassoon matter over our signatures they would then see what they would do to us.

We had telegraphed to our Minister telling him that our mails were being interfered with, and in about a week he replied that a special order had been issued that our mails should not be interfered with. Still, after this order we know a number of papers and some letters were tampered with, and that sealed registered letter of which I spoke was opened.

After his fall from office, those whom he had fleeced began to file Petitions against him and his henchmen to recover blackmail—vain hopes. Almost by dark the morning of the 31st January he stealthily left the city by the southern route. That afternoon Omer Beg came on from Moush to act as temporary Governor. January was an unparalleled month for this region—clear all the time, and but little snow on the ground.

What had the European Commission been doing since about the 21st of that month, when they arrived at Moush? They were practically in the same position that Mr. Hallward was, in spite of the effusive promises of the Government at Constantinople that every facility would be afforded to make a thorough investigation. No one was allowed to see them. Five young men from the leading families here managed to get to Moush by stealth, where they hoped to report the state of things here. They were at once taken in charge by the police, who warned them not to have anything to do with the rebel Moush Armenians. The next morning Omer Beg insisted on their going directly back with him to Bitlis. So they had their trouble for their pains.

About the time he arrived here, Avedis Gagoscan and his two companions,

members of the Mejlis, who had been imprisoned seventy-two days without any writ, were released. No one seemed to know who had imprisoned them or why they were there. Now there are eleven of the Notables left in prison. Two different Addresses of thankfulness, &c., have been presented to them to sign, one prepared by Hadji Nadjmadin, and the other by the Istinaf "Raes," President of the Court before which they are to be tried. They are given to understand that if they sign it they will be acquitted; if not, that they will receive the extreme sentence.

The feeling of the Turks against the Armenians is very bitter now. Talk of massacring them is common in the coffee-houses. The situation is very critical. We do not know what may turn up before help arrives. We have hopes that Europe is going to do something for poor Armenia. I do hope you will use your influence against any compromise measure. There will never be any peace while the Turk is left in sole or even leading control over Christian subjects. Safety and equality are impossible for them under Moslem rule. Joint control by European Powers would seem to be the most practicable and beneficial method at present, rather than giving over to any one Power, especially if that be her nearest neighbour. But of these things you have a better chance to speculate than I.

Since I have some space left before closing, I wish to say that the story of Shakey, who threw herself from a cliff, followed by others, managed to get through to me in the papers. I had heard nothing like it till then, except the case of a woman who threw herself with a child in her arms down a precipice rather than fall into the hands of her pursuers. I have followed the case up some to see if I could find traces of such a story. I can report that I have found faint traces of it. The story that reached the papers may have been embellished some, but I feel pretty sure that it has some foundation in fact. Of course, we have not heard half of what took place at that time.

I have told you of how the women were active in helping the men. In one instance I have heard how they took the places of the men while they ate and rested. In one case women hurled stones down at their adversaries while it is said cannon-balls were shattering the rocks above them. The temper of the women can be judged by the remark a refugee at Hatskeuy made. She said she was sorry her husband had fallen into the river while bringing a load of wood on his back, for he did not have a chance to take part in the fight—that was her regret.

While I am about it let me tell the account a soldier gave of a handsome, newly-wedded couple that had fled from a village to a near mountain. Four soldiers went after them, and when they caught them they told them it was a pity for them to be killed, and said they could live if they would accept Islam. But they met death rather than change their faith. A story or two on the other side to relieve the dark, dark story. An officer had rescued a fine boy and kept him for some time. The mother heard of his whereabouts, and on going to the officer he handed the boy over. Another officer took for himself a woman whose husband had been killed. Her parents went to him and besought him now that he was their son-in-law to spare them, and he saw that they, and I believe the others of the house, were kept unharmed.

I trust you have not lost your patience with this long account. Using words similar to what I have seen quoted from Gladstone's birthday speech (the full speech fell into Tahsin's hands), I will say, "If the words are many, the subject is large."

I am taking the liberty of sending a copy of this to a prudent friend in America. I shall be glad to be of any service to you hereafter, especially in the cause of humanity, if it isn't such a perfect apex to the pyramid of creation.

Bitlis, Turkey, January 18, 1895.

No. 79.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 22.)

(No. 232.)
My Lord,

Pera, April 17, 1895.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 133 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to state that I went yesterday to the Porte and called the attention of Said Pasha

to the increasing violence of the Turkish authorities in the country districts of the Armenian provinces. I read to him extracts of private letters from Mr. Graves, of which copies are annexed. I also called his attention to the statements contained in the despatches, copies of which I have the honour to inclose herewith, and to Mr. Hallward's Report on the state of the Vilayet of Van, transmitted to your Lordship (No. 144 of the 2nd March), which confirm the view taken in Mr. Graves' private letters. I endeavoured to impress upon his Excellency the extreme gravity of the situation, and the danger of forcing on a crisis which might prove disastrous to the Turkish Empire. I urged that the provincial authorities should be plainly given to understand that they must act with the greatest circumspection, and should treat all classes of the population with justice and moderation, and that they should be plainly told that every act of injustice and violence, and every irregularity on the part of the civil or military authorities, would place the Government in a difficult position, and would be visited with the severest condemnation.

In order to insure attention being paid to my communication, I left with Said Pasha a Memorandum giving the substance of my language and of Mr. Graves' letter.

Mr. Block, who accompanied me, read extracts from the despatches, and will furnish Said Pasha with a summary of them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 79.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Private.) *Erzeroum, April 6, 1895.*
(Extract.)

ACCOUNTS from all parts of the country show that the Turks, far from realizing their present position, and attempting some outward show of amendment, are growing more and more shameless in their misgovernment and oppression. Of course, this is making the case for interference an overwhelming one, but it is to be feared that things may get strained to the breaking point in some of the out-of-the-way places before the local scoundrels in authority are brought to their senses. They know nothing of the powerful pressure which is being exercised upon the Central Government, because the latter is too proud to admit the fact to its own understrappers until it is absolutely obliged to do so; and as the local oppressors go on thinking and saying that the Sassoun massacres were a very wholesome and salutary lesson to the Armenians, and would be ready to repeat them with the full expectation of approval and reward.

Inclosure 2 in No. 79.

Consul Graves to Mr. Block.

(Private.) *Erzeroum, April 6, 1895.*
(Extract.)

WHAT people ought to understand at Constantinople is that, up here at any rate, the Turks are not the least ashamed of what they have done, and don't seem to have had their eyes opened to the fact that they cannot and will not be allowed to go on as before. So far, they are carrying on just as if nothing had ever been suggested to them on the subject of their gross misgovernment and oppression, and are inclined to be openly derisive of [illegible] and [illegible].

Inclosure 3 in No. 79.

Résumé of a Report received from Resht (Vilayet of Erzéroum).

LES déprédations des Kurdes sont ici, plus que jamais, à l'ordre du jour; une bande de douze brigands Kurdes est entrée dans la nuit de 17 Octobre (v. s.) dans le couvent de Sourpe Garabeth, à dix-sept heures de distance du chef-lieu du caza, et après avoir lié le chef gardien et les domestiques, a complétement saccagé et pillé le couvent. La dite bande a aussi emmené les troupeaux du couvent. L'autorité Ecclésiastique Arménienne de Keghi a fait les démarches nécessaires, mais le Gouvernement ne s'est adressé à aucune mesure pour arrêter les brigands.

Tandis que, d'un côté, les Kurdes commettent toute espèce de cruauté, les Agents du Gouvernement, d'un autre côté, par les vexations qu'ils mettent en pratique dans la perception des impôts, rendent la vie impossible à la pauvre population.

Pressurer et maltraiter les Arméniens, sous prétexte de la perception des impôts, est érigé en système. On lie les Arméniens; on les bat et on les torture. Les gendarmes, délégués à la perception, obligent partout la population à fournir gratuitement la nourriture, à eux et à leur chevaux.

Chaque jour des troupeaux appartenant à des Arméniens sont volés; les voyageurs allant d'une ville à l'autre rencontrent des voleurs en chemin. Si la misère causée par cet état de choses continue, la disparition de la race Arménienne dans ces parages n'est qu'une affaire de temps.

Comme preuve de l'état d'esprit ici, nous signalerons le fait suivant:—

Une bande de brigands a rencontré dernièrement quelques paysans, Arméniens et Musulmans, qui se rendaient de Keghi à Erzeroum pour vendre des bestiaux. Les brigands ont ordonné aux Musulmans de se retirer avec tout ce qu'ils avaient, et n'ont rien pris de leurs bestiaux; tandis que les Arméniens ont dû laisser entre les mains de ces malandrins tout ce qu'ils possédaient.

Le 28 Octobre (v. s.), 1894.

Résumé of a Report received from Keghi.

Les vexations des Agents du Gouvernement en ce qui concerne la perception des impôts continue. On va jusqu'à peindre la tête en bas ceux qui ne peuvent s'acquitter de leur dette, à cause de leur misère.

Dernièrement la fièvre typhoïde et la rougeole régnaient ici en état épidémique. La maladie même n'a arrêté les Agents du Gouvernement. On est entré de force dans les maisons des malades et en plusieurs endroits on a vendu leurs matelas pour encaisser l'impôt.

Dans les quarante-six villages se trouvant aux environs de Tokat la cruauté des gendarmes dépasse toute narration.

Le Caïmacam de Keghi, qui montre une grande cruauté dans la perception des impôts du district, a été complimenté par le Vali d'Erzeroum pour son zèle! Aussi il n'y a plus rien à espérer des autorités locale et provinciale, en ce qui concerne le soulagement de la population.

Le 4 Février (v. s.), 1895.

Telegrams received from Keghi.

Le 8 Mars (v. s.), 1895.

Tandis que nous nous trouvons incapables de nous acquitter des dîmes de moutons, cinq gendarmes sont venus, le 3 Mars, dans notre village pour percevoir l'impôt militaire de l'année 1311. La perception se faisait régulièrement, pourtant les dits gendarmes, agissant contrairement à la volonté de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, ont battus cruellement plusieurs personnes et brisant nos portes, ont capturé plus de vingt femmes, qu'ils ont emprisonnées dans un endroit situé dans le bazar, insultées et tenté d'outrage; ils ont exigé de ces pauvres femmes le paiement des dettes.

La majorité des personnes battues se trouve mortellement malades, par suite des blessures reçues.

Ces cruautés des gendarmes ont été rapportées au Caïmacam pour demander justice, mais le Caïmacam, au lieu de faire le nécessaire, nous a fait emprisonner. Le dit Caïmacam ainsi que le caissier du Gouvernement travaillent à dessein à envenimer la situation. Leurs agissements sont la conséquence de cette politique.

En nous vouant à la justice Impériale nous demandons l'envoi d'un fonctionnaire chargé d'enquête.

Signatures: Mirakian, Ehoyan, Kenchegueriun, Bosian, Dabanian, Maridian, Balian, Dilbérian, Léboyan, Moutayan, habitants du village Bouh (nom du village illisible à cause de la transmission télégraphique.)

Le 10 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

Les gendarmes avaient déjà fait vendre nos semences, matelas, &c., pour encaisser le reliquat de nos impôts de l'année financière, qui vient de finir. Le 5 Mars quatre gendarmes sont arrivés dans notre village pour percevoir les impôts de l'année 1311, qui a commencé le 1er Mars, et après avoir proféré des paroles outrageantes contre notre religion et nos honneurs ont cruellement battu nos enfants, dont l'un se trouve en état d'agonie.

Ces gendarmes ont crié qu'en agissant ainsi, ils exécutaient les ordres du Caïmacam et des agents de police; ces faits ont été rapportés au Caïmacam mais il n'a attaché aucune importance à nos plaintes. Nous nous vouons à la clémence Impériale pour porter plainte contre ces faits iniques.

Signatures: Aloyian, Kalaydjian, Zumbékian, Mouchouyan, Vartanian, Markégatian, habitants du village de Dzermag.

Le 9 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

Le montant de nos impôts pour l'année 1310 était de 40,000 piastres; 36,000 piastres en avait été payés; il ne restait que 4,000 piastres, représentant la dette des indigents et des habitants absents du village. Pourtant les zaptiés se sont emparés de nos meubles et même de nos moutons; nous avons été conduits au Commissariat de Police; là, le Chef de Police, sans s'enquérir de la quantité de la dette et de la valeur des objets saisis, a fait vendre à 700 piastres les dits objets, qui avaient une valeur de 3,000 piastres. Cette somme a été retenue pour compte de l'année 1310.

Pour les redevances de l'année financière 1311, qui a commencé le 1er Mars, quatre gendarmes sont arrivés le 3 et ont commencé la perception forcée des impôts, en proférant des paroles outrageantes contre notre religion et nos honneurs. Ils ont fait coucher plusieurs d'entre nous par terre et nous ont fait battre avec une cruauté inouïe avec des gourdins.

Ces gendarmes déclarent que ces agissements ont été ordonnés par le Caïmacam et par des agents de police du chef-lieu du district. Ces gens veulent produire quelque nouvel incident pour couvrir les preuves de leur cupidité.

Signatures: Vartanian, Baghbandjian, Kuchguérian, Tchavouchian, Boghguian, Roulian, Rabian, Abrahamian, Limonian, habitants du village de Terman.

Le 11 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

La conduite du Caïmacam de Keghi, en ce qui concerne la perception des impôts, est contraire tant à la conscience, qu'aux prescriptions de la loi.

Des 45,000 piastres, somme totale des impôts de notre ville pour l'année financière 1310, 4,000 piastres, représentant les dettes des indigents et de ceux des habitants qui se trouvent dans de ville éloignées, n'ayant pu être payés, le Caïmacam nous fait emprisonner trois ou quatre fois par semaine. Sans prendre en considération la

sainteté de ces jours de Carême, il a fait prendre des dits indigents les seuls matelas qu'ils possédaient pour coucher dessus. Il a fait signer de force un écrit dans lequel il fait déclarer à la population que les dits indigents sont capables de s'acquitter de leurs dettes mais qu'ils ne paient pas par esprit d'opposition et de résistance.

Pour le Conseil des Notables (Ihtiar Medjlissé) de Keghi: Obédian.

Le 14 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

Cinq gendarmes, préposés à la perception des impôts, s'étaient depuis longtemps installés dans notre village, où ils invitaient les habitants des villages environnants, et où ils obligeaient la population de les nourrir, hommes et moutures. Tandis que les exigences de ces gendarmes formaient une charge bien lourde pour nous et causaient notre ruine, sept autres gendarmes sont arrivés, ils y a déjà quelques temps, avec mission d'encaisser les impôts: et entre autres méfaits, se sont permis des outrages à l'honneur des femmes, ainsi qu'à notre religion; ils ont violemment battu plusieurs habitants, et ont pendu, la tête en bas, les nommés Boghoss, Mardik, Kirkor en les liant d'une double chaîne. Ces pauvres gens, qui ont perdus beaucoup de sang par leur nez, se trouvent actuellement au lit.

Les gendarmes déclarent ouvertement avoir agi par l'ordre des agents de police; nous nous adressons à la justice de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, pour que le nécessaire soit fait.

Signatures: Kirkor et Hatchik, habitants du village de Mélikan.

Le 14 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

Quelques gendarmes étant arrivés, à 5 heures (à la Turque) de la nuit, à notre village, pour percevoir les impôts, ont brisé les portes et, entrant dans nos demeures, ont obligé nos femmes et nos enfants à quitter leurs lits; ils ont jeté nos couvertures et autres meubles dans la rue, battu sans cause plusieurs d'entre nous et affolé nos femmes et enfants; ils ont emprisonné, dans un endroit choisi par eux, une trentaine de femmes, qu'ils ont insultées.

Ces gendarmes ne paient pas la contre-valeur de leur nourriture et des fourrages de leurs chevaux; comme il n'y a aucun arriéré d'impôt, ils déclarent ouvertement qu'ils sont venus par esprit de vexation. En annonçant ces faits, nous nous vouons à la justice Impériale.

Signatures: Mélkonian, Bérkoyan, Réissian, Mourdian, habitants du village d'Faik (nom du village illisible à cause de mauvaise transmission télégraphique.)

Inclosure 4 in No. 79.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 1, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that several bad cases of oppression and extortion on the part of the local authorities are announced from the Caza of Keghi, in the south-west of the Sandjak of Erzeroum, as having occurred within the past few weeks. On the plea of collecting taxes, and by order of the Keghi Kaïmakam and police officers, bodies of gendarmes are said to visit the Armenian villages, where they behave in the most brutal manner, beating and torturing the men, and shamefully ill-using the women, while they live at free quarters upon the villagers.

The inhabitants of the villages Sevkili, Arikli, and Melikan, have at last summoned courage to complain officially, and telegrams have been sent by them to the Vali, and to the Armenian Archbishop of Erzeroum. The Archimandrite Aristakes, Vicar of Keghi, has also complained that, on his making representations to the Kaïmakam on

the subject of one of these acts of injustice, the latter only cursed and abused him, and publicly tore up the written application which he had presented to him.

My Russian colleague, during a recent interview with the Vali, mentioned these complaints to his Excellency, who, however, absolutely denied their truth, and declared that they had been trumped up by the Archimandrite for the purpose of giving trouble. Notwithstanding this denial, I learn that the chief of police, Servet Bey, has left Erzeroum with an escort of gendarmes, and it is believed that he has been ordered to proceed to Keghi to inquire into the alleged abuses. The Vali has also dispatched the Major of Gendarmerie, Mehmed Bey, to inquire into the outrage at Tchipod, reported in my despatch to your Excellency of the 21st ultimo.

These and similar incidents are, no doubt, partly occasioned by the stringent orders from head-quarters to local authorities to collect whatever money can be extracted on account of taxes for the exhausted treasury, and by the way in which the latter now interpret such orders. The gendarmes have hardly returned from beating up the arrears of the past year, when they are sent back to the same village with orders to collect the full "verghi" tax for the year just begun, which is usually paid in instalments spread over the whole year. In cases of this kind, nearly the whole burden is, of course, made to fall upon the Christian minority, and since the Sassoon massacres (the extent and nature of which are well known to every inhabitant of the country) have been allowed to go so long unpunished, the opinion has naturally gained ground with the worst class of Moslems, official and otherwise, that the Christians have been delivered into their hands to do with as they please.

This state of affairs, which extends to all the vilayets in this Consular jurisdiction, as your Excellency will have perceived from recent reports from Mr. Hallward and Mr. Boyajian, may be expected to grow worse as the summer comes on. The Kurds will then come to take the little that the zaptiehs have left, and complete the ruin of the outlying Christian population, which is only to be averted by such strong and speedy action as the Turkish Government seems unwilling or unable to take.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 5 in No. 79.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 2, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of an extract from a private letter, dated Bitlis, the 19th March, which contains some interesting details as to the state of affairs in that city, and the action of the acting Vali, Emnes Bey.

I have communicated to Mr. Shipley the part relating to the imprisonment of Sassoon Armenians for having attempted to present themselves before the Commission, and to the dismissal of the Boulanik men accused of transporting the portions of the remains of Sassoon women to Russia; as well as the report that some of the Kurd chiefs and officers were ready to produce Government orders for their action if their subsequent safety were guaranteed by the Consuls.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 6 in No. 79.

Extract from a Private Letter from Bitlis, dated March 19, 1895.

ON Thursday, the 14th, a Sassoon girl was brought to Court, that she might formally declare her acceptance of the Moslem faith. Formerly in such cases the person changing faith was handed over to those to whose faith he belonged, that the priest and others might make sure that he had accepted the other faith of his own free will and could not be induced to remain a Christian; but of late only a few

minutes are allowed in which the priest can converse with the supposed proselyte—at the most half-an-hour. In this case is was thought to embarrass matters if the Gregorians were called in, so the girl was called a native of the Catholic village of Norshen, on the Moush plain, and the Catholic priest was called to see her. He saw her for a little while and signed the required certificate. Afterwards he confessed in private that he had not done the right thing; that he was sure from her speech that she was not a native of Norshen, nor a Catholic, and mistrusted that she was from the Sassoon region. However that may be, we are quite sure that there are a number of such young women in the Moslem houses of the city.

Friday, Omer Bey made an address in one of the mosques, exhorting the people to make every effort to keep the peace and to refrain from acts of violence. The week before a street crier gave notice that no one was to wear arms on penalty of a fine. That notice and this address have tended to quiet things a good deal.

Friday evening, the 15th March, three men and a boy, natives of Aghpik, in Sassoon, were brought here from Moush and put in prison. Sunday morning they were sent on southwards under escort. While they were here, the people got up quite a collection for them in the market, some 600 piastres, for their road expenses, &c. Their story is that they went to Moush to present a Petition to the Commission. That the three men were arrested and put in prison; that the boy, whose dress made him appear more like a Moushli, was not molested, and happening to have the Petitions by him went to where the Commission sits and, after considerable difficulty, succeeded in getting a hearing and giving his papers in; after he went out, he was also arrested and imprisoned with his three companions. There they were kept sixteen days before being sent on here.

What may possibly turn out as an interesting evidence has turned up. It seems that, some three months ago, five men from Bostankaud, in Lower Boulanik, were brought to Moush and convicted of having taken portions of the remains of 1,000 women to Russia. The case came on appeal or for indorsement to the Higher Court here, and yesterday it was dismissed or quashed, in order that the records of the case may be wiped out.

We have heard on pretty good authority, also, that some of the Kurdish Chiefs and officers were willing to produce Government order for what took place last summer, provided that the Consuls would guarantee their safety.

It seems that help is coming in slowly for the poor refugees. One man of the Gudjieguzan is said to have starved to death, but this is not likely to happen again. And yet in such a case it seems as if help might come in and be applied openly to the homeless sufferers. There are between 500 and 1,000 in the Moush plain, and probably a good many more than that south in the Diarbekir Vilayet. Taxes are already being collected around here in advance in three instalments for the year. Usually they are not collected in advance, and then in from six to fifteen instalments for the year.

There is some talk among the Turks that after Bairam the reserve troops will be collected—for what purpose remains to be learned. Probably it is only talk.

On Sunday, the 17th March, a delegation of Armenians waited on Omer Bey to ask about the imprisoned Notables. They reminded him that some five Armenians, at considerable risk, had gone to Moush in their behalf; that he had not allowed them to remain there, but had brought them back with him, promising that the matter of the prisoners would soon be attended to; that during all this time nothing had been done, the guiltless Notables staying in prison, while the guilty henchmen of Tahsin still held office as before, and so on.

In reply he said that the Armenians had been to blame in sending unreasonable and severe complaints to Constantinople; that the officials in question were the children whom the Government had brought up; and it was out of the question for it to go back on them; that Tahsin was not inactive in Constantinople now, and that he did not really dare to press matters further, so the probability is that nothing will be done. Only one hearing has been given them in Court, since a Turkish member has been ill, and though now better, probably will not attend till after Bairam. Then some other excuse will probably be found to delay proceedings, and keep the Notables in prison. Omer said the case was now in the Court, and if by any possibility the case should go against them, he would assure them that he would procure an Imperial pardon.

No. 80.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 233.)

Constantinople, April 17, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 60 of the 23rd January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, commenting on the account of the robbery of the mail at Tokat transmitted to your Lordship.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 80.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trébizond, April 9, 1895.

Sir,

IN returning, herewith inclosed, the four letters on the subject of the post robbery at Tokat, transmitted in your Excellency's despatch of the 20th February, I beg leave to set down here as follows the comments made on their contents by Dr. Jewett at Sivas:—

1. An American who visited Tokat, and a Greek of that place, informed Dr. Jewett that there is no doubt of the post having been attacked and robbed by Armenian revolutionists.

2. The mail-bags in the majority of cases are not guarded by more than two zaptiehs.

3. The courier was killed and horribly mutilated.

4. A well-informed Armenian wrote to him that the doctor had said the zaptieh was not ill.

5. At night some brigands entered a Turkish village called Yacouboglou, at the foot of Yildiz-Dagh, three or four days after the robbery; Dr. Jewett was there to treat a woman who was shot. The villagers reported the affair to Tokat, and were only fined 80 piastres for not informing the authorities sooner.

6. That the postal officials may have been negligent or even parties to the robbery is probable, as there are enough instances where Government officers have stolen Government funds. It may be a significant fact that private funds were not stolen, while Government money was taken. There are, or recently were, four Turks at Tokat essentially revolutionists.

7. Tokat and the immediate vicinity was doubtless vigorously searched.

8. According to the official report of the City Physician, the police, and a representative of the Bishop, the son of Minas Ghorgodian, and the son of Agob Cherbatian, died of fright. It may not be so as the people of Tokat still attribute their malaria and other illnesses to that disturbance.

9. Up to the 22nd September about 200 were arrested, and during the whole affair he is led to judge from various sources about 300 were arrested.

10. Americans who visited Tokat told him that they believed prisoners were beaten, burnt, deprived of food and water, suspended by the feet, hung up with iron collar round the neck so that their toes would just touch the floor, packed with criminals, and grossly outraged by Turks, all this in order to force them into giving evidence about the robbery.

11. The Vali said that the Sergeant Abdul, hoping to gain a decoration for his achievement, went with insufficient force to arrest an Armenian runaway in a house; there they both got killed.

12. A crowd gathered and committed depredations, broke the doors and windows, looted the houses, killed one man besides the runaway, and wounded several.

13. According to the report of the investigation made by the police, the City Physician and the Archbishop's representative, twenty-two were seriously wounded, two died of fright, two were killed, and five women were assaulted or outraged; in addition Dr. Jewett thinks another runaway was killed in the encounter as well as a gendarme.

14. Until the arrival of the Vali general disorder and lawlessness reigned. The Mutessarif seemed too weak to control the bad officers and unruly roughs of Tokat, where there are a number of tobacco smugglers ready for a fight or a chance to plunder.

15. Dr. Jewett heard that several innocent people were robbed and maltreated in the streets.

16. As regards the telegrams to the Sultan alleged to have been intercepted by the Vali, copies will, if possible, be obtained from the Bishopric.

17. The Archbishop says some young females were imprisoned.

18. Dr. Jewett thinks there is no doubt that some were outraged by the police and soldiers.

19. The Archbishop's Secretary, it appears, was imprisoned five months; Der Mardiros, one of the Ecclesiastic Council, ten days; Agop Boyadjian, a lay member of the Council, five months; and his colleague, Garabet Assadourian, two and a-half months.

20. The Archbishop says no hymns were sung except the regular hymns and chants of the church contained in the service book.

21. The participation of the roughs in the searches was much diminished by the Vali's orders.

22. The reported depredations in the villages are much exaggerated. The police lived on the villagers while employed in making their search.

23. The Archbishop says two graves were opened in search for arms while he was at Tokat.

24. At Sivas a telegram, similar to one mentioned, was presented for signatures. Three Armenians connected with the Government signed it; others refused, or evaded doing so. The Vali said if they would not sign it, it showed they were all revolutionists. Portukian, who was assaulted with murderous intent on the 26th March, signed the paper.

25. The case of Bogos Kenchiyan has no connection with the Tokat affair. At the time of the placard two years ago, a letter was found in which Professor Thoumayian wrote to Bogos: "I am sorry I did not see you when you visited Marsovan."

The Government concluded from that that Bogos had something to do with the Revolutionary Society. He was imprisoned for several months, and was let out on the payment of £T. 20 to £T. 25. Several months later the Vali tried to make him declare that he knew about the Revolutionary Society. He refused to give the information demanded, and he was put into prison. When Bogos' house was searched, the music without words of a revolutionary air was found in a book belonging to his wife. Years ago she was a teacher in the Protestant school, and it was claimed by the Government that she must have taught the song to the girls of the school. The charge stood against her for a long time, when in November the Vali had her arrested and kept in prison for about two weeks, with her unweaned baby, which, when it cried too much, was given an outing.

Bogos, who, Dr. Jewett says, was never a student of the American College at Marsovan, was released with his wife, though he had been distributing Henchagist journals, a fact evidently unknown to the Government.

Dr. Jewett further reports what he has heard from Armenian sources.

The information is to the effect that on the night following the attack the robbers went to a disreputable house on the outskirts of Tokat, where they got drunk and talked of the affair.

Some women told the police, and three of them were arrested. They were tortured into confessing their guilt, and into informing the authorities where the money was concealed, all of which was recovered excepting some 40*l*. Two have been released, the third remains in prison, while the rest are still at large.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 81.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 234.) *Constantinople, April 17, 1895.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 162, Confidential, of the 13th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the Armenians in prison in that vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 81.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 6, 1895.

Sir,

BY your Excellency's despatch of the 11th ultimo, which reached me on the 28th, I am desired to furnish such information as I may possess on the subject of Armenian prisoners in this Consular district.

Without awaiting the particulars which I had requested Dr. Jewett to supply me as regards the Sivas Vilayet, I beg to inclose herewith a Return of Armenians arrested on political charges during the last fifteen months in the Province of Trebizond. The details are those derived from official and private sources, Turkish as well as Armenian.

It will be observed that the statement made in the inclosure sent me by your Excellency giving the number of Armenian prisoners in this vilayet as more than fifty is not correct, unless the estimate is intended to include ordinary offenders in custody.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 81.

ARMENIANS arrested on Political Charges in the Trebizond Vilayet from January 1, 1894, to April 1, 1895.

I.—PRISONERS Condemned.

No.	Name.	Age.	Where born.	Where arrested.	Date of Arrest.	Date of Condemnation.	Sentence in Years.	Where imprisoned.	Remarks.
1	Adam Achaian	Years. 30	Sivas	Samsoun	January 24, 1894	March 11, 1895	15	Constantinople	A revolutionist. Read some Mission literature. Condemned here. Sent to Constantinople.*
2	Hagop Calousdian	26	Trebizond	"	"	"	10	Trebizond	Ex-clerk of Salvation Messenger Agency and Adour Asiatique's associate.†
3	Kevork Terzibaschian	30	Khaspeit	"	"	"	15	"	Ex-clerk of the aforesaid Company and Adour Asiatique's associate.†
4	Gabriel Bakerjian	30	Chevlamlik	Chevlamlik	"	"	5	"	A tailor, the liquor of this Mercantile and 1,000 cartridges.†
5	Avedik Terzibaschian	22	"	"	"	"	5	"	A Protestant tailor and Bakerjian's accomplice.†
6	Gazar Khachadour	17	Khaldzeboar	Balch	September 24, 1894	November 6, 1894	3	"	An Armeno-Catholic, sentenced at Balch for possessing a Russian song. Liable to Mukhtar Pasha Removed to Trebizond goal on ground of illness.

* See despatches No. 5, January 10, 1895, and No. 17, February 7, 1895.

† See despatch No. 5, January 10, 1895.

II.—Prisoners under Trial.

No.	Name.	Age.	Where born.	Where arrested.	Date of Arrest.	Where imprisoned.	Remarks.
1	Der Tatoul Garmalian	Years. 31	Marsil	Charshamba	August, 1894	Constantinople	A priest suspected of sedition. Arrested in August, released in September, rearrested in October. Sent to Constantinople 22nd March.
2	Der Mikael Tahmazian	65	Keukluk	Unieh	" "	"	A priest suspected of sedition. Sent with above on Porte's demand to Constantinople. Release of both expected.
3	Mikael Tokatlian	70	Tokat	Samsoon	" "	"	A commission agent. Case from New York addressed to him. Released on bail.
4	Kirkor Talmazian	40	Keukluk	Unieh	September 7, "	Trebizond	Headman of Keukluk village. Der Mikael's nephew. A revolver and a pamphlet found in his house.
5	Sahag Tahmazian	27	"	"	" "	"	Relative of Der Mikael. A weapon found in his house.
6	Ghiragos Tahmazian	50	"	"	" "	"	Ditto, ditto.
7	Mesrobe Ohanian	20	Marsil	Charshamba	" "	"	Relative of Der Tatoul. A weapon found in his house.
8	Ferdinand Arzoumanian	18	Charshamba	Unieh	" "	"	The owner of documents alleged compromising.
9	Hadji Bedros Kazanjian	46	Constantinople	Samsoon	" "	"	A painter, said to have been twice before a political prisoner elsewhere in Turkey.
10	[illegible]	20	Trebizond	" "	January 24, 1895	Samsoon	A silversmith, A butcher, A clerk, A watchmaker — suspected of aiding Samsoon prisoners to escape.* — These four may or may not be considered as political prisoners by the Ottoman Government.
11	Armenag Assadjian	27	Charshamba	" "	" "	"	A butcher, arrested in connection with Der Tatoul's case.
12	Mesrobe Ishak	25	Marsovan	" "	" "	"	A commission agent, cashier of Samsoon Armenian School Committee.
13	Hagop Boyamian	50	Erbaa	" "	" "	"	
14	Bedig Gumurian	26	Marsil	" "	February 5, "	"	
15	Agop Kerkorian	30	Cesarea	" "	" "	"	

* See despatch No. 18, February 12, 1895.

III.—Prisoners Released.

No.	Name.	Age.	Where born.	Where arrested	Date of Arrest.	Date of Release.	Remarks.
1	Garabet Dzarukian	Years. 36	Gerun	Samsoon	February 20, 1894	January 10, 1895	A Samsoon merchant, tried on the charge of seditious correspondence.*
2	Agop Vartighian	50	Kharput	" "	" "	" "	A Samsoon merchant, father of Kevork Vartighian, tried on the charge of harbouring revolutionists.*
3	Garabet Kapriellan	37	Samsoon	" "	" "	" "	A Samsoon butcher, tried on the charge of aiding Kevork Vartighian to escape.*
4	Agop Hanikarian	20	Charshamba	Charshamba	" "	" "	A clerk, tried on the charge of being a revolutionist.*
5	Agopos Keshishian	25	Kupou Kaya	" "	" "	" "	A villager, tried on the charge of supplying Fisent Calioglan with food.*
6	Markar Gelian	35	"	"	" "	" "	A Protestant, tried on the charge of harbouring Avedis Terzibashian.*
7	Bedros Garibian	19	"	"	" "	" "	Tried on the charge of distributing rifles.*
8	Agop Hamshighian	25	"	"	" "	" "	Tried on the charge of concealing rifles.*
9	Garabet Hamloghlian	22	"	"	" "	" "	A sportsman, tried on the charge of accepting two rifles.*
10	Mardiros Kazazian	30	"	"	" "	" "	Tried on the charge of concealing a rifle.*
11	Elia Papazian	25	Trebizond	Amasia	April 16, "	October 17, 1894	A Protestant silversmith, released at Amasia, but rearrested here on Bekir Pasha's demand.†
12	Arshom Hovadjian	22	"	Trebizond	" 18, "	April 24, "	A Catholic, imprisoned for posting a signal gun.‡
13	Hampar Maranian	20	Gerun	"	May 22, "	January 13, 1895	Garabet Dzarukian's partner, arrested in May, released in June, rearrested in December.
14	Agop Marmorian	26	"	Amasia	" 22, "	" "	Ditto, ditto.
15	Arsen Bedrosian	50	Baiburt	Suruncah	" 15, "	June 13, 1894	A Mahommedan convert. Expelled from Trebizond Vilayet.‡
16	Gurgin Lusajian	40	Kazi, Baiburt	Batoum	August 8, "	January " 1895	A workman at Batoum, acquitted on charge of having assaulted, at Constantinople, Simon Bey Maksud.
17	Ghiragos Bedrossian	37	"	"	" "	" "	Ditto, ditto.
18	Kara Artin Dasid	66	Tekour	Charshamba	" "	March 20, "	Headman of village, accused of sedition in refusing to pay an extortion of 30*l.* to Kaimakam Musta Pasha.
19	Caloust Chakerian	46	Marsil	"	September 7, "	" 25, "	Arrested in connection with Der Tatoul's case.
20	Garabet Dombalian	30	Erbaa	"	" "	" 1, "	A Baptist, acquitted in January, detained on Khalil Bey's request, released on Cadri Bey's order.*
21	Dangian Kostat	35	Kupou Kaya	"	" "	January 10, "	A rural guard, found innocent on charge of being a revolutionist.*
22	Daron Chamchetsian	25	Tokat	Samsoon	" 27, "	February 20, "	Released on the charge of participating in the Tokat post robbery.§
23	Ohanes Pembegian	18	"	"	October 10, "	January 13, "	Pupil of the Venice Armenian School, who returned home with a pamphlet on drill.
24	Stepan Kurdjian	20	Trebizond	Trebizond	" 24, "	October 27, 1894	A Catholic accused of using words of political significance in a letter.‡
25	Kaloust Khedeshian	30	Tocmara	Kerasseud	February 20, 1895	March 18, 1895	A merchant, acquitted on charge of collecting money for revolutionary purposes.

* See despatch No. 5, January 10, 1895. † See despatch No. 29, April 17, 1894. ‡ See despatch No. 13, January 25, 1895. § See despatch No. 62, September 29, 1894.

British Consulate, Trebizond, April 6, 1895.

No. 82.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April 22.*)

(No. 236.)
Constantinople, April 17, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Colonel Chermside, Military Attaché to the Embassy, respecting the Hamidieh Militia Cavalry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 82.

Colonel Chermside to Sir P. Currie.

Constantinople, April 8, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Excellency the following, in continuation of my despatch of the 6th December, 1894:—

Hamidieh Cavalry.—A Commission sitting at Yildiz was occupied during last autumn with modifying and amending the Hamidieh Militia Cavalry Regulations.

President: Mushir Ahmed Shakir Pasha.

Members: Ferik Muzafir Pasha, Ferik Vandergally Liwa Brockdorff, and two or three others.

A variety of proposals were considered, one being to drop the title "Hamidieh," to which the force has hitherto done no great credit.

Proposal of Half Regular Squadron to each Hamidieh Regiment.—The most important proposition, perhaps, is to take from each regiment of regular cavalry, with the exception of those of the first order, but including those of Tripoli, one squadron. These thirty-two squadrons to be divided into sixty-four demi-squadrons, one to be stationed at each of the sixty-four Hamidieh re-imodel head-quarters as a nucleus for the instruction and discipline of these troops.

It is said that an Iradé approving this measure exists, but has not been published for execution.

One squadron of each Hamidieh regiment of four squadrons would be called out annually, and two squadrons in the case of six squadron regiments. These squadrons would be instructed for several months.

Inspection.—Another proposal is to divide the force and district into "inspections." Each such division would be visited, and the troops of it inspected by a Divisional Cavalry General of one of the Ordous.

On mobilization the Hamidieh cavalry regiments of that inspection would be available to join that Ordou by the Divisional Commander of Cavalry of which it had been periodically inspected.

The displacement of the Hamidieh to long distances would prove a serious, difficult, and costly matter. His Imperial Majesty is suspicious of moves and concentrations of troops, so that it is by no means sure that No. 2 will be carried out.

There were numerous other proposals, which, as no Iradés embodying them have been issued, need not be gone into, but they struck me as mostly theoretical proposals of people not conversant with the condition of life in Kurdistan.

Officer Commanding Hamidieh.—Liva Edhem Pasha, the Acting Officer Commanding Fourth Division and Hamidieh regiments, has come to Constantinople.

Liva Vehbi Pasha, Aide-de-camp, conveyed in the end of 1894 standards and commissions to Erzinghian for presentation to some of the Hamidieh regiments and their tribal Chiefs.

Igdam, December 15 (27), 1894.—Five of the eight regiments still under formation were said to have been complete by the end of last year.

Constructions.—Mosques and schools for the tribesmen have been built at Patnotz, Subenitz, Madrek, Feghan, Undvik, Boz Keshan, and Karajan.

Regular Officers serving in Hamidieh.—The officers who have been sent to the provinces as instructors are mostly resident at the regimental head-quarters when the latter are in towns or villages where accommodation can be procured. No instruction appears to have been given.

[This should have appeared on p. 100.]

No. 81*.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April 22.*)

(No. 235.)
Constantinople, April 17, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 190 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, respecting the Armenian national movement at Suedia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 81*.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Aleppo, April 4, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I have received a further communication from Mr. Sanders, who reports that the villagers of Kessab, in the Suedia Plain, profess to have agents in Cyprus who have promised to supply them with arms and ammunition. He reports, from information received from these villagers, that the Armenian Revolutionary Committee has enrolled numerous members at Antab and Marash.

On the other hand, I, two days ago, received a report from Marash that the state of public feeling in that neighbourhood is much calmer than it has been for some time past. In corresponding with Mr. Sanders, I have found it necessary to use cypher, as, on one occasion recently, a letter which I addressed to this gentleman was lost in transmission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

The regiments which have been seen mustered, and have been photographed (by M. Ximènes and others) had paraded to receive colours, &c.

Thus, at and near Vem in autumn 1893 there was a force of some 1,600 men, belonging, I believe, to twelve (or ten) regiments.

Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, Diarbekir, informs me that he has not heard complaints of the conduct of the Hamidieh in that vilayet, but in Van, Erzeroum, and Bitlis the contrary is the case.

The regiments in Diarbekir, according to his report, which is most probably correct, number nine; another report stated that there were eleven.

I have already forwarded a list of these. I append a Table of the thirty-five in the Erzeroum Vilayet, taken from the official Sal-Nameh of that district, which is, however, no great guarantee of accuracy. The Table shows the distribution of the regiments. The first name is that of the Officer of Regulars Commanding, the second that of the tribal Chief.

The regular officers are mostly, as mentioned above, at the regimental head-quarters, which is also frequently the seat of the Civil Government of a caza. That of Antab, for instance, represents the head-quarters of three regiments.

Mr. Graves, Her Majesty's Consul for Kurdistan, writes as follows under date of the 30th January, 1895:—

"The regular officers remain mostly at the regimental head-quarters, which are almost all, as you see, caza capitals, but some of them prefer to spend most of their time in Van, Erzeroum, &c. They do nothing except, perhaps, write Reports to the Mushir, and give no instruction whatever. In fact, since the scheme was started I don't believe there has been a single attempt to drill or exercise Hamidiyés. The latter laugh at the regular officers, and these latter do not attempt to enforce any kind of obedience or discipline. The native (Kurd) officers and men raid and fight with neighbouring tribes or among themselves just as before, or rather, much more than before, as they take advantage of the prestige of their uniform, and refuse to recognize the civil authorities, or Courts, or police, on the ground that they are His Imperial Majesty's soldiers.

"This is not a sensational or exaggerated account, but one which will be confirmed by any truth-telling Turkish officer whom you may ask who has been employed on this job. They are all very sick of it, and would, I think, enjoy being told to take regular troops and 'hot' their quondam comrades in arms, who have treated them with great insolence in most cases. . . . . In any case, in my humble opinion, the measure which must precede any real reform is the disarming and disbanding of the Hamidiyé rabble, by whatever means it has to be accomplished. You know far better than I do what force would be required for the purpose, but I have rather a mean opinion of their stomach and efficiency for real fighting, and am inclined to believe that, if they attempted resistance, a comparatively small but mobile force in the hands of a resolute Commander would very quickly break them up in detail without much trouble or loss."

In the Diarbekir Vilayet, up to the end of 1894, the force had not such a bad reputation.

Her Majesty's Vice-Consul, Diarbekir, says, under date of the 2nd January, 1895:—

"Up to this day nothing bad has been heard regarding their behaviour in this province.

"I do not know if they always wear their uniforms, but on all occasions when the regiment comes out they do so."

I have, &c.
(Signed) HERBERT CHERMSIDE.

TABLE showing the Hamidieh Regiments, with their Stations and names of Officers in the Vilayet of Erzeroum.

No. of Regiment.	Commanding Officers.	Station.
1	Colonel Hafiz Abdila Bey	Aintab.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein Bey	
2	Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein Husni Bey	Aintab.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein Bey	
3	Colonel Nour-ed-Din Bey	Aintab.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein Bey	
4	Colonel Nouri Bey	Karakilissé.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Salim Pasha	
5	Lieutenant-Colonel Hamdi Bey	Karakilissé.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein Bey	
6	Colonel Kadri Bey	Karakilissé.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Ali Bey	
7	Colonel Mustafa Bey	Aintab.
	Lieutenant Ta-lulan Bey	
8	Lieutenant-Colonel Zekériyé Bey	Ala-ingerd.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein Bey	
9	Colonel Muhamed Sádik Bey	Dayadin.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Muhamed Bey	
10	Lieutenant-Colonel Hassan Bey	Dayadin.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Mustafa Bey	
11	Lieutenant-Colonel Asef Bey	Dayadin.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Hussein Bey	
12	Colonel Khalil Bey	Dayadin.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Muhamed Bey	
26	Colonel Ahmed Bey	Khinis.
	Lieutenant-Colonel (vacant)	
29	Lieutenant-Colonel Ali Bey	Khinis.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Faiz-ed-Din Bey	
34	Colonel Muhamed Ali Bey	Erzeroum.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Mustafa Bey	
35	Lieutenant-Colonel Ali Bey	Hassan Kalé.
	Lieutenant-Colonel Kouli Kiana Bey	

No. 83.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 237.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 17, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a document which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch, being the résumé of a Petition addressed to him by the Armenian population of Marsovan.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 83.

Résumé of a Petition addressed to the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople by the Armenian Population at Marsovan.

LES Arméniens, malgré ce fait qu'ils constituent la force vive du pays, ou plutôt en raison même de ce fait, sont, depuis quelques années, systématiquement soumis à un régime intolérable d'exactions conçu par la plus stupide tyrannie. Leur anéantissement est le but poursuivi, et de fait, ils n'ont jamais été aussi près de la ruine générale. Pour ne citer que deux exemples, l'impôt foncier est trois ou même quatre fois plus lourd pour le contribuable Arménien que pour le Musulman, et la taxe annuelle de 38 piastres à laquelle tout Chrétien du sexe masculin est soumis de l'âge de 15 à 75 ans, à titre d'exonération militaire, est perçue du jour même de la naissance jusqu'à la mort, et à raison de 60 à 70 piastres en moyenne.

La perception des impôts donne lieu à de véritables scènes de sauvagerie. Pour ne citer encore qu'un exemple entre mille, une bande composée de gendarmes et de soldats, soutenus et excités par la population Musulmane, ont dernièrement presque assommé à coups de bâtons et de pierres quatre personnes inoffensives (suivent les noms). Des scènes analogues se répètent chaque fois qu'un marchand ou boutiquier Arménien fait mine de refuser crédit aux soldats.

Ces derniers, sûrs de la plus parfaite impunité, pénètrent par groupes dans les terres appartenant aux Arméniens, et, après avoir pris tout ce qu'ils trouvent à leur convenance, se font un plaisir de dévaster les cultures, arrachant les vignobles, &c. Quant aux femmes ou même à de toutes jeunes enfants qu'ils surprennent seules, elles sont toujours victimes de leurs brutalités. Aussi les Chrétiens des villes ne s'aventurent-ils guère dans la campagne, qui sera bientôt un désert.

Des plaintes adressées aux autorités n'ont jamais abouti qu'à augmenter l'hostilité de la soldatesque et amener une recrudescence de fanatisme.

L'effervescence est aujourd'hui telle parmi les Musulmans qu'ils profèrent à tout instant des menaces d'extermination des Chrétiens, et cela au vu et au su de l'autorité, qui encourage même les sinistres meneurs. Nous transcrivons ici, mot à mot, la déclaration faite aux Arméniens par le Caïmacam de notre ville: "Vous n'ignorez pas ce qui s'est passé à Sassoun et à Talori; quarante villages et 8,000 à 10,000 hommes ne sont plus. Eh bien, tenez pour certain qu'au mouvement qui se produirait ici je vous fais tous massacrer, comme cela s'est passé là-bas."

Des corps montés, dits "Hamidiés," ont été formés, avec des "Tcherkesses" et des Géorgiens, véritables bandits, qui sont une menace incessante pour nous. C'est, d'ailleurs, un fait acquis ici que si les Musulmans s'avisent de réaliser leurs sinistres projets, l'autorité, déjà débordée par le fanatisme qu'elle a déchaîné dans les masses, sera impuissante à empêcher le cataclysme.

Quand, dans ces derniers temps, nous nous sommes plaints de la rapacité effrontée des fonctionnaires, et demandé une situation plus supportable, le Gouvernement nous a signalés à l'Europe comme des Socialistes. Des pauvretés de cette force, qui dénotaient une fois de plus le caractère astucieux de la diplomatie Turque, sont pourtant un mot d'ordre pour les autorités. Il suffit qu'un Arménien soit soupçonné d'avoir une certaine situation de fortune pour qu'il soit jeté en prison, et il n'est relâché qu'après qu'il a désintéressé depuis l'agent de police surnuméraire jusqu'au premier titulaire de la Magistrature, en passant par toute la hiérarchie, et la prévention dure souvent des mois et des années s'il s'obstine à ne pas s'exécuter à temps. Quant aux pauvres, ils sont chargés de fers, soumis à des tortures sans nom, et pourrissent littéralement dans leurs cachots infects, leurs familles, dont ils sont souvent l'unique soutien, livrées à la grâce de Dieu. Inutile d'ajouter que les jeunes détenus subissent les brutalités les plus odieuses de la chiourme Turque.

Qu'on juge de notre situation par ce fait qu'à la sommation faite par le Vali de Sivas, venu en personne à Marsovan, de signer une adresse de remercîments à la Sublime Porte, la population Arménienne, quoique terrorisée par toutes sortes de menaces, a opposé un refus désespéré. Cette suprême résistance a obligé le Vali de se contenter de la signature de quelques-unes de ses créatures que le Caïmacam avait réunies en conseil paroissial.

Nous vous conjurons de vouloir bien agir auprès des Puissances qui représentent la civilisation, et qui seules peuvent nous délivrer de notre affreuse situation, situation que, l'Europe en est convaincue, le Gouvernement Turc n'a ni le désir ni le pouvoir d'améliorer.

Nous sommes ici tout prêts à faire connaître devant une Commission d'Enquête Européenne la vérité tout entière dont on ne peut avoir qu'une idée incomplète.

La teneur de la présente requête a été communiquée à leurs Excellences les Ambassadeurs de Sa Majesté Britannique, de Russie, de France, et des États-Unis.

(Suivent 253 signatures.)

Marsovan, le 24 Février (8 *Mars*), 1895.

No. 84.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 238.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 17, 1895.*

ON the 14th March I forwarded to the Consuls in Asia Minor for revision the list of Armenian prisoners in their respective districts, as communicated to me by the Armenian Patriarch.

I have now the honour to inclose a copy of a despatch from Mr. Barnham, giving

an account of the prisoners within the Consular district of Aleppo. I have called Said Pasha's attention to some of the cases mentioned in this despatch, and at his request am sending him a copy of it.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 84.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Aleppo, April 3, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 14th ultimo, inclosing a list of Armenians imprisoned at various towns within this Consular district, and instructing me to report thereon.

The greater number of these prisoners are those who were condemned for sedition at Zeitoun in 1892.

1. Sister Elizabeth Ohannesian was sentenced to three years' imprisonment for singing revolutionary songs, and inciting to rebellion.

Her sentence having expired, she has been released from Aleppo gaol, and sent to her village Tchouk-Merdzivan, in the Vilayet of Adana.

Sempad Ghazarossian was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for writing seditious poetry, and is now in prison at Aleppo.

The following is a corrected list of the other Armenian prisoners who are now in Aleppo, their terms of imprisonment not having expired:—

Panoss Mozian.
Asdvadzadour Tozlian.
Sarkis Bostijian (not Boldjian).
Asdvadzadour Kupelian } Brothers.
Manouk Kupelian. }
Hovhannes Kupelian. }
Artin Kupelian. }
Kirkor Parlakian.
Sarkis Hassassian (not Kanessian).
Garabed Kupelian.
Sarkis Martavalian.
Sarkis Harsunkian.
Boghos Tavidian.
Garabed Bulbulian.
Muggerditch Bulbulian.
Kevork Tchakerian.
Mikael Oghoulian.
Vartan Madthéosian.
Ispirid Bedanian.
Panoss Bosdanian.
Panoss Kaidbaghdanian.
Haroutiun Gondzian.
Dérounk Hagob, or Hagob Alamanoudian.
Caloust Haydoudian.

I have thus added three names to those contained in your Excellency's list, and they should possibly be included with the four whose names are stated to be unknown.

All are undergoing sentences of five years' imprisonment except Caloust Haydoudian, whose term is ten years.

They were sentenced on the 20th April, 1892, but the terms of imprisonment date from the day of arrest, which was nearly twelve months earlier. Consequently, with the exception of Caloust Haydoudian, they should be released next spring.

2. The following is a list of twelve Armenians of the village of Beylan who are now imprisoned at Aleppo, and whose trial is proceeding to day. They are accused of sedition on apparently very trifling grounds. Certain subscription cards for the payment of money to their church were found in their possession, and were declared to contain treasonable inscriptions in the Armenian language. Some of them were arraigned for having been in the possession of letters from the late Catholicos of Sis, which contained expressions disrespectful to the Mahommedan religion. They were arrested eight months ago, their priest, Kevork, with them; their church was closed by the authorities, and has remained closed ever since. Their names are as follows:—

Arakel.
Simon Sadikian.
Melchizedek.
Serkis Kevorkian.
Bedros Der Nschanian.
Greeor Condouradji.
Kevork Djamgotch.
Bedros Djamgotch.
Garabed Djabrian } These two were released yesterday.
Garabed Sheikh }
Papass Kevork, the priest. He was admitted to bail two months ago.

To these I have to add the name of Greeor Ashdjian, of Beylan, who was five months ago condemned to three years imprisonment for sedition, and is now in Aleppo.

3. Turning to the list of ecclesiastical prisoners and exiles, I have to confirm my telegram of the 24th ultimo, reporting the removal of Garabed, Archbishop of Zeitoun.

The following ecclesiastics were summoned to Constantinople by a despatch from the Minister of Justice, dated the 11th Shubat:—

Garabed, Archbishop of Zeitoun;
Papass Ghevont, of Tchouk-Merdziven;
Papass Nichan, of Beylan;
Papass Stepan, of Beylan; and
Hohannes, Archbishop of Hadjin.

Of these, the first four embarked for Constantinople on the 26th ultimo by the Turkish steamer "Adana."

Hohannes, Archbishop of Hadjin, has been in exile and under police surveillance at Mumhedj, in the Caza of Bab. He was sent to Alexandretta on the 20th ultimo, and will be forwarded to Constantinople in a few days.

No news has been received here lately as to Nighoghos, Archbishop of Fernouz, who is confined at Boudrum Kale, in the Vilayet of Smyrna.

Prisoners at Djisr Shoghour.

4. I have not been able to ascertain whether there are any Armenians confined in the prison at Djisr-Shoghour for political crimes. I am given to understand that there are none, but I will make further inquiry and report. Four or five villagers of Kessab were arrested some months ago on a charge of having sold gunpowder to Armenians in Aintab.

The names of two, who were acquitted, are:—

Melcom Kouyoumdjian and
Avidis Kouyoumdjian.

Having gone through the names in your Excellency's list, I beg to supplement the information conveyed above by a further list of prisoners and exiles.

5. The following is a list of twelve Armenians of Alexandretta who are now in Adana, and have remained in gaol, without trial, for about eighteen months:—

Boghos Shamlian.
Thitoun Shamlian.
Hohannes Shamlian.
Nazaret Dehédjian.
Georgi Sherbetjian.
Hairabed Galian.
Vahran Djabrian.
Serkis Kassabian.
Haroutiun Urfalian.
Manouk Aivazian.
Avidis Tashjian.
Serkis Tashjian.

In the Sandjak of Deir there are two exiles from Aleppo, Kondouradji Karnik and Demirdji Roupen.

Bedros Goghighian, of Hadjin, has been exiled to Rikka, in the Sandjak of Urfa.

Haigazoon Khandanian, of Guerun, was a young student proceeding to Aintab College, and arrested *en route* because his passport was not in order. He was imprisoned at Aintab, then at Aleppo, and after six months' confinement was removed under escort, and all trace of him has been lost.

Dr. Hohannes Tavlian was arrested at Killis about six months ago owing to an irregularity in his passport, and exiled to Amasia.

6. There are about thirty Armenians imprisoned at Khalfati, near the Euphrates, in the Caza of Birejdjik. I have not yet received their names, but their history is as follows:—

They belong to Djebeen, a village in the Sandjak of Urfa. A young Armenian girl of the village was carried off by a Kurd, who was afterwards killed by the girl's brother. A body of Kurds came down to Djebeen to avenge his death, and sacked the village. The villagers fled in every direction, and the village has since been

abandoned; but the Government sought out a large number of them, and imprisoned them at Khalfati on charge of complicity in the death of the Kurd.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 85.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 239.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 17, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond in regard to the state of affairs at Gurun.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 85.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, March 21, 1895.*

THE following is an extract of Dr. Jewett's letter of the 12th instant:—

"About a month ago a placard was posted on the door of a mosque in Gurun. It purported to have been written by Armenian revolutionists, and said the days of the Turkish Government are numbered. The Kaimakam is said, on pretty reliable authority, to have accused the police of having put up the placard. The matter was kept very quiet, and no arrests were made. The police are called the Vali's men in Gurun.

"An intelligent estimate gives 80 per cent. of idleness at Gurun during the past year. Formerly the merchants of Gurun used to buy annually about 6,000*l.* of goods from Aleppo. This year they bought scarcely 800*l.* worth.

"A gun belonging to an Armenian contrabandist was recently found at Gurun and brought to Sivas as if it were a grand affair."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 86.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 243.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 18, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward herewith a Memorandum and project of reforms for the Armenian provinces, which have been drawn up under the direction of my French and Russian colleagues and myself, and which were finally agreed to at a meeting held yesterday at the French Embassy.

These papers, which we now submit for the approval of our respective Governments, contain, in our opinion, the minimum of the measures and reforms which it appears to us necessary to apply in the provinces disturbed by recent events with the view of re-establishing order and security, and guaranteeing the Armenian population against a return of the late disorders. We do not intend to communicate these proposals to our colleagues until they have been approved by our Governments, and handed to the Sultan.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 86.

Memorandum.

Mars–Avril 1895.

LE projet ci-annexé contenant l'ensemble des dispositions qu'il serait nécessaire d'introduire dans l'organisation administrative, financière, et judiciaire des vilayets mentionnés, il a paru utile d'indiquer dans un Mémorandum séparé certaines mesures qui dépassent le cadre d'un Règlement administratif, mais qui sont la base même de ce Règlement et dont l'adoption par la Sublime Porte est d'une importance primordiale.

Ces différents points sont:—

1. La réduction éventuelle du nombre des vilayets.

2. Les garanties pour le choix des Valis.

3. L'amnistie des Arméniens condamnés ou détenus pour faits politiques.

4. La rentrée des Arméniens émigrés ou exilés.

5. Le règlement définitif des procès pour crimes et délits de droit commun, actuellement en cours.

6. L'examen de l'état des prisons, et de la situation des prisonniers.

7. La nomination d'un Haut Commissaire de surveillance pour la mise en application des réformes dans les provinces.

8. La création d'une Commission Permanente de Contrôle à Constantinople.

9. La réparation des dommages subis par les Arméniens victimes des événements de Sassoun et de Tulori, &c.

10. La régularisation des affaires de conversion religieuses.

11. Le maintien et la stricte application des droits et privilèges concédés aux Arméniens.

12. La situation des Arméniens dans les autres vilayets de la Turquie d'Asie.

1. *Réduction Eventuelle du Nombre des Vilayets:*

Les réformes devant être appliquées dans les six vilayets d'Erzeroum, Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, et Diarbékir, il y aurait lieu d'étudier la réduction du nombre de ces provinces. Une nouvelle répartition, qui permettrait de réaliser une certaine économie dans les dépenses générales de

Pendant dix ans antérieurement à 1875 l'Eyalet d'Erzeroum comprenait les districts de Tehildir, Kars, Erzeroum (vilayet actuel), ainsi qui Van, y compris Hakkiari, Bitlis, et Mouch. Cet Eyalet fut ensuite divisé en cinq vilayets, après la guerre de 1877-78; la partie de ce territoire qui restait à la Turquie fut divisée en Vilayets: Erzeroum, Van,

l'Administration, faciliterait peut-être le choix des Valis en en diminuant le nombre et fortifierait leur autorité en améliorant leur situation matérielle. Elle devrait être faite de façon que les populations fussent réparties en groupes ethnographiques le plus homogènes possible dans les différentes unités administratives de chaque province.

2. *Nomination des Valis garantie.*

Les Puissances, attachant la plus grande importance au choix des Valis, dont dépendra essentiellement l'efficacité des réformes prévues par le Traité de Berlin, sont résolues à faire à la Sublime Porte des représentations chaque fois que le choix se porterait sur des personnes dont la nomination pourrait présenter des inconvénients; c'est pourquoi elles trouveraient nécessaire que le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman, afin d'éviter sur ce point des malentendus fâcheux, voulût bien tenir officieusement les Représentants des Puissances au courant des choix qu'il aurait l'intention de faire.

3. *Amnistie.*

Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan accordera une large amnistie aux Arméniens accusés ou condamnés pour des faits politiques et qui ne seraient pas convaincus de participation directe à des crimes de droit commun.

4. *Rentrée des Émigrés.*

Tous les Arméniens à quelque religion qu'ils appartiennent, qui auraient été exilés sans jugement soit hors du territoire de l'Empire Ottoman, soit hors des provinces qu'ils habitaient, ou qui auraient été forcés d'émigrer à l'étranger poussés par la misère ou par crainte des événements, sans y avoir pris une part criminelle, pourront librement rentrer en Turquie ou dans des provinces qu'ils avaient dû quitter, sans être inquiétés par les autorités. Ils rentreront en possession des biens qu'ils possédaient avant d'avoir quitté le pays.

5. *Règlement des Procès.*

Tous les procès pour crimes ou délits de droit commun, actuellement en cours d'instruction ou de jugement, devront être réglés sans retards. Des Commissions Judiciaires, déléguées spécialement

Hekkiari, Moueh. Depuis lors le district Hekkiari a été rattaché au Vilayet de Van, et le district de Mouch au Vilayet de Bitlis nouvellement créé. Depuis lors aussi le Sandjak de Mamouret-ul-Aziz est devenu vilayet avec l'addition de quelques territoires voisins, tandis que le Vilayet de Deyrsim est redevenu sandjak.

de Constantinople, seront envoyées dans chaque vilayet et procéderont rapidement, au chef-lieu de chaque sandjak, au règlement de toutes les instances en suspens.

Leurs décisions ne seront susceptibles d'aucun recours.

Ces Commissions se composeront d'un Président et de deux Assesseurs, dont l'un Musulman et l'autre Chrétien. Elles seront accompagnées d'un Juge d'Instruction et d'un Procureur. L'un des deux sera Chrétien.

6. *État des Prisons.*

De hauts fonctionnaires seront délégués de Constantinople pour inspecter les prisons dans chaque Vilayet, se rendre compte de leur état matériel, de la situation des prisonniers, et du traitement dont ils sont l'objet. Ils s'enquerront de la conduite des Directeurs et des gardiens des prisons et pourront proposer la révocation immédiate et la mise en jugement de ceux qui n'auraient pas observé, à l'égard des condamnés ou des détenus, les prescriptions de la loi.

Chacun de ces hauts fonctionnaires sera accompagné d'un adjoint, qui sera Chrétien s'il est Musulman, et inversement.

Ils devront, dans un délai de quatre mois au plus, rédiger un Rapport où ils consigneront toutes leurs observations sur le résultat de leur mission, ainsi que sur les modifications et améliorations à introduire dans le service et l'aménagement des prisons.

7. *Haut Commissaire de Surveillance pour l'Application des Réformes.*

Dès que les nouveaux Valis auront été nommés, ils se rendront au chef-lieu de vilayet, en vue d'organiser l'administration de la province sur les bases nouvellement adoptées.

Ils procéderont à l'installation des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacans nommés par le Gouvernement, à la répartition territoriale des nahiés dans chaque caza; ils feront dresser les listes électorales et procéder à l'élection des Conseils de Nahiés, ainsi qu'à celle des Mudirs.

Ils veilleront à ce que les Collecteurs d'impôts soient élus sans retard et à ce que le budget de la province et la répartition des charges entre les différentes subdivisions administratives soient établis dans le plus bref délai possible.

Note d'Assim Pacha du 3 Octobre 1880 (Réformes en Arménie, Art. 1, para. 1.)

Un Haut Commissaire, délégué spécialement par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, sera chargé de surveiller l'exécution prompte et exacte de ces réformes. Pendant toute la durée de sa mission, il aura pleine et entière autorité sur les Valis qui le tiendront au courant de toutes les mesures qu'ils prendraient pour l'application des nouveaux Règlements.

Le Haut Commissaire Impérial recevra les Pétitions et les vœux des habitants et devra en tenir compte dans les limites des nouveaux Règlements. Il terminera sa mission par une inspection générale des vilayets et aura le pouvoir de réformer les mesures qui n'auraient pas été prises en conformité avec la loi et les nouveaux Règlements.

Le Haut Commissaire Impérial sera accompagné dans sa mission par un adjoint qui sera Chrétien s'il est Musulman, et inversement.

8. *Commission Permanente de Contrôle.*

Il sera institué à la Sublime Porte une Commission Permanente de Contrôle, chargée de surveiller l'exacte application des réformes.

Cette Commission sera présidée par un haut fonctionnaire de l'Empire, civil ou militaire. Elle se composera de six membres pris parmi les hauts fonctionnaires civils de l'État compétents en matières administrative, juridique, et financière; trois d'entre eux seront Musulmans et les trois autres Chrétiens.

Elle se réunira à la Sublime Porte au moins une fois par mois.

Elle aura pour mission de surveiller la stricte application des Lois et Règlements, de signaler à la Sublime Porte les irrégularités qu'elle constaterait dans l'Administration ainsi que les fonctionnaires qui manqueraient à leurs devoirs; de recevoir les Pétitions et d'examiner les vœux et doléances de la population ainsi que tous les rapports qui pourraient lui être adressés par les représentants des communautés.

C'est à elle que les Ambassades feront parvenir directement par l'intermédiaire de leurs Drogmans, tous les renseignements et communications qu'elles jugeraient nécessaires.

Elle pourra demander aux Valis des rapports sur les questions qu'elle serait ainsi appelée à examiner. Deux fois par an, les Gouverneurs-Généraux devront lui adresser une note détaillée sur l'état des prisons et la situation des prisonniers.

Elle pourra déléguer, quand elle le jugera à propos, un ou plusieurs de ses membres pour faire des tournées d'inspection dans les vilayets.

Elle présentera à la Sublime Porte des rapports sur toutes ces questions et aura le droit de correspondance directe avec les Valis et les Départements Ministériels compétents.

9. *Réparations à accorder aux Arméniens Victimes des Événements de Sassoun, Talori, &c.*

Les Arméniens qui auraient eu à souffrir soit dans leurs personnes, soit dans leurs biens des événements de Sassoun, Talori, &c., recevront des indemnités et réparations convenables.

Le Haut Commissaire Impérial de surveillance sera chargé de faire les investigations et de prendre les mesures nécessaires à cet effet.

10. *Conversions Religieuses.*

La Sublime Porte veillera à ce que les conversions religieuses soient entourées de toutes les garanties découlant des principes établis par le Hatti-Houmayoun de 1856 (Articles 10, 11, et 12) et trop souvent éludés dans la pratique.

Les personnes qui voudraient changer de religion devront être majeures et ne pourront être autorisées à faire leur déclaration de changement de religion qu'après un délai d'une semaine pendant laquelle elles seront placées sous la surveillance du chef de leur culte.

11. *Maintien des Privilèges des Arméniens.*

La Sublime Porte donnera des instructions précises aux autorités pour empêcher le retour des infractions contraires aux droits et privilèges découlant pour le clergé Arménien et la communauté du Sahnamatroutioun de 1863 (Statut Organique des Arméniens) et des Bérats octroyés par les Sultans.

12. *Situation des Arméniens dans les autres Vilayets de la Turquie d'Asie.*

Dans les autres vilayets de la Turquie d'Asie où la population Arménienne de certains sandjaks forme une partie notable de la population générale, il sera nommé auprès du Vali un fonctionnaire Chrétien spécial chargé des intérêts des Arméniens.

Ce fonctionnaire recevra les Pétitions et réclamations de la population Arménienne et les fera connaître au Vali qui leur donnera, d'accord avec lui, la suite qu'elles comportent.

Ce fonctionnaire adressera en outre régulièrement des Rapports à la Commission Permanente de Contrôle à Constantinople.

Dans ces vilayets, s'il se trouve certaines localités (telles que Hadjin (Vilayet d'Adana) ou Zeitoun (Vilayet d'Alep), &c.), où les Arméniens forment la majorité de la population, la division administrative actuelle sera modifiée et les prescriptions, du projet de réformes, sur la constitution des nahiés seront appliquées aux localités ainsi érigées en unités administratives séparées.

Inclosure 2 in No. 86.

Projet de Réformes Administratives à introduire dans les Provinces Arméniennes : Vilayets actuels d'Erzeroum, Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, Diarbékir.

Chapitre I.—*Valis.*

Article 1er. Les Valis seront choisis parmi les hauts dignitaires de l'État sans distinction de religion, présentant les plus grandes garanties d'intelligence, de capacité, et de probité. On s'abstiendra en conséquence de nommer aux fonctions de Valis des personnes dont la désignation présenterait de notoriété générale, des inconvénients d'ordre public ou politique.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 12, Art. 39; Vol. v, pp. 50, 51, Art. 5.

La Sublime Porte, convaincu que l'application efficace des mesures et réformes qui suivent dépend essentiellement des hautes qualités des personnes qui seront placées à la tête de l'Administration des Vilayets, se fera un devoir de veiller à ce que les fonctionnaires que le Gouvernement aurait l'intention de désigner possèdent les capacités requises.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 50 *et seq.* Instructions sur les Vilayets, Chap. I et II.

Art. 2. Les Valis ainsi nommés ne pourront être révoqués ou changés que dans le cas où ils seront reconnus après constatation légale coupables d'actes contraires aux lois.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 12. Note d'Abedin Pacha du 5 Juillet, 1880.

Ils seront nommés pour cinq ans et leurs pouvoirs pourront être renouvelés.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre II, Art. 27.

Art. 3. Les Valis seront assistés par les Adjoints (Moavins) qui seront Chrétiens, lorsque le Vali sera Musulman, et Musulman lorsque le Vali sera

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 13, Chap. II, Art. 17.

Chrétien. Les Moavins seront, comme les Valis, nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Ceux-ci seront spécialement délégués par le Vali pour la réception des Pétitions des habitants du Vilayet pour la surveillance de la police et des prisons et pour le contrôle de la perception des impôts. Ils seront chargés de l'intérim du vilayet en l'absence du Vali. Les Valis seront assistés d'un Conseil-Général Provincial élu dans des conditions à déterminer et qui aura pour mission de délibérer sur les objets d'utilité publique tels que l'établissement de voies de communication, l'organisation de caisses de crédit agricole, le développement de l'agriculture, du commerce et de l'industrie, et la propagation de l'instruction publique.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 217, Titre I, Chap. III, Arts. 26 et 62 à 75; Vol. iii, p. 25, Titre IV, Chap. I; Vol. v, p. 23.

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre IV, p. 8, et Art. 71.

Chapitre II.—*Mutessarifs.*

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 14, Art. 308.

Art. 4. Les Mutessarifs placés à la tête des sandjaks seront nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan. Dans chaque vilayet, un certain nombre de postes de Mutessarifs seront occupés par des Chrétiens. Les Mutessarifs Chrétiens seront placés dans les sandjaks où se trouve le plus grand nombre de Chrétiens. Dans les vilayets où il n'y aurait qu'un seul Mutessarif celui-ci sera nécessairement Chrétien si le Vali est Musulman.

Le Mutessarif sera assité d'un Moavin qui sera Chrétien si le Mutessarif est Musulman, et vice versa. Le Moavin sera chargé de l'intérim du sandjak en l'absence du Mutessarif.

Chapitre III.—*Caïmacams.*

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre VII, Art. 132; Titre XVI, Art. 293.

Art. 5. Les Caïmacams seront nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan sur la désignation du Vali. Ils seront choisis par ce dernier parmi les personnes jouissant de la confiance de la population et remplissant les conditions requises par les Règlements en vigueur. Dans chaque sandjak un certain nombre de postes de Caïmacams seront occupés par des Chrétiens.

Les Caïmacams Chrétiens seront placés dans les cazas où se trouve le plus grand nombre de Chrétiens.

Art. 6. Dans tous les cas le nombre des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacams Chrétiens ne pourra être inférieur au tiers du nombre total des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacams du vilayet.

Le Caïmacam comme le Mutessarif sera assisté d'un Mouvin, qui devra être Chrétien si le Caïmacam est Musulman, et vice versa.

Auprès des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacams siégera un Conseil analogue au Conseil-Général Provincial.

Le Conseil du cazu sera élu par les Conseils des nahiés, le Conseil du sandjak par les Conseils des cazas.

Le Conseil-Général Provincial sera élu par les Conseils des sandjaks.

Aucun fonctionnaire ne pourra être membre de ces différents Conseils.

Ces Conseils seront présidés respectivement par le Vali, le Mutessarif, et le Caïmacam.

Ils sont composés de quatre membres sans compter le Président, dont deux Musulmans et deux Chrétiens.

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe. Titre VII, Art. 132, p. 17.

Chapitre IV.—*Cercles Communaux ("Nahiés").*

Art. 7. Chaque caza sera subdivisé en un certain nombre de nahiés (cercles communaux).

Le nahié est une subdivision territoriale qui comprendra plusieurs villages, avec leurs propriétés immeubles, terrains, pâturages, et autres terres, dont le plus important sera le chef-lieu.

La circonscription de chaque nahié sera autant que possible fixée de telle façon que les villages d'une même religion soient groupés dans un même nahié; d'une façon générale, il devra être tenu compte des conditions topographiques et ethnographiques, ainsi que des convenances des populations.

Le nahié comprendra 2,000 habitants au moins, et 10,000 au plus.

Tout groupe de villages faisant partie d'un nahié, et dont les habitants ne seront pas inférieurs en nombre à 1,000, pourra demander à être constitué en nahié séparé, à condition de prendre à sa charge les dépenses de la nouvelle Administration.

Art. 8. Chaque nahié sera administré par un Mudir, assisté d'un Conseil élu par la population, et composé de quatre membres au minimum et huit au maximum.

Ce Conseil choisira parmi ses membres le Mudir et un Adjoint. Le Mudir devra appartenir à la classe qui forme la majorité des habitants, et l'Adjoint à l'autre classe. Le Conseil aura, en outre, un Secrétaire.

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 20, Titre X. Arts. 154, 168.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 283; Vol. iii, p. 22, Chap. III, Art. 50; Vol. v, pp. 60, 64.

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 12, Art. 103.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, pp. 60, 61. Règlement, Art. 2.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 22; Vol. v, p. 61 Règlement, Chap. II, Art. 7.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62. Règlement, Art. 13. Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 20, Titre X, Art. 154.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 13.

Art. 9. Si les habitants d'un nahié sont d'une même classe, les membres du Conseil seront élus exclusivement parmi les habitants appartenant à cette même classe; si la population du Cercle Communal est mixte, la minorité devra être représentée proportionnellement à son importance relative à condition qu'elle comprenne au moins vingt-cinq maisons.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 61, Art. 9. Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 22, Art. 168; p. 20, Art. 155.

Art. 10. Les Mudirs recevront sur le budget du nahié une allocation convenable; des appointements fixes seront également alloués au Secrétaire du Conseil.

Un local spécial sera affecté au Conseil du nahié et au siège de l'Administration du Cercle Communal.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 61, Art. 10 (textuel). Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 24, Art. 185.

Art. 11. Les membres du Conseil du nahié devront être sujets Ottomans, avoir des intérêts dans le nahié, être âgés de plus de 30 ans, et choisis parmi ceux qui paient à l'État une contribution annuelle de 100 piastres, et qui n'ont pas subi de condamnation.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 11.

Art. 12. Dès que les membres du Conseil auront choisi parmi eux le Mudir, son nom sera communiqué au Vali, qui le confirmera officiellement après avoir constaté que les conditions légales ont été remplies.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 12 (textuel).

Art. 13. Les Imams, les prêtres, les professeurs d'Ecoles, et tous ceux qui se trouvent au service du Gouvernement, ne pourront exercer les fonctions de Mudir.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 16.

Art. 14. Les membres du Conseil seront renouvelés par moitié chaque année; les Mudirs resteront en fonctions pendant deux ans. Le Mudir et les membres ne pourront être réélus qu'une seule fois de suite.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, pp. 63, 64.

Art. 15. Les attributions du Mudir et des membres du Conseil, ainsi que le mode de leur élection et de leur remplacement, seront réglés suivant les prescriptions du Règlement sur l'Administration des Communes, Articles 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, et 26, et du "Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe" (Titre 12).

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 24, Art. 60; Vol. v, p. 61, Art. 8.

Art. 16. Les villages compris dans le Nahié auront chacun un Mukhtar; si un village contient plusieurs quartiers, et si les habitants sont divisés en différentes classes, il y aura un Mukhtar pour chaque quartier et pour chaque classe d'habitants.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 60, Art. 1. Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turque d'Europe, Art. 103, p. 13.

Art. 17. Aucun village ne pourra, pour partie, relever de deux Cercles Communaux à la fois quels que soient sa position et le nombre de ses habitants.

Chapitre V.—*Police.*

Art. 18. Les agents de police sont recrutés, sans distinction de religion, dans la population du nahié par le Conseil du Cercle Communal, en nombre suffisant pour les besoins locaux et pour la participation au service de la gendarmerie du vilayet.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 51, Chap. II, Art. 6.
Note d'Abedin Pacha du 7 Juillet, 1880.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 34, Titre XVII, Arts. 314, 305.

Art. 19. Les agents de police du nahié sont placés sous les ordres du Modir. Ils sont commandés par des Chefs qui exercent des fonctions semblables à celles de Tchaouchs et des On-Bachis. Ils seront armés, et porteront un uniforme à déterminer dans la suite. Ils seront rétribués sur le budget du nahié; en dehors de leur service ils pourront vaquer à leurs travaux ordinaires.

Note d'Abedin Pacha du 5 Juillet, 1880

Note de la Porte du 3 Octobre, 1880.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Art. 168, p. 22.

Ils seront montés ou non montés selon les besoins du service.

Les non-Musulmans astreints au paiement du Bédel-i-Askerie, qui se trouveront engagés dans la police, seront dispensés du paiement de cette taxe pendant toute la durée de leur service

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre XVII, Art. 308, p. 34.

Art. 20. Les agents de police du nahié doivent en premier lieu assurer d'une façon permanente le bon ordre et la sécurité sur le territoire et les routes du nahié. Ils doivent en outre, d'après les ordres du Mudir, contribuer à fournir l'escorte de la Poste et prêter main forte au Mudir pour l'exécution des sentences judiciaires et la mise en vigueur des prescriptions de la loi.

Chapitre VI.—*Gendarmerie.*

Art. 21. Il sera organisé dans chaque province en vertu d'un *Règlement spécial* un corps de gendarmerie provincial dont les officiers et soldats seront choisis parmi toutes les classes des sujets de l'Empire. Le recrutement de la gendarmerie est fait dans le vilayet parmi tous les habitants en état de servir et sans distinction de race ni religion. Elle est recrutée pour les deux tiers parmi les agents de police du nahié moitié parmi les agents Musulmans, moitié parmi les agents appartenant aux communautés non-Musulmanes. L'autre tiers sera composé de Tchaouchs, et de Bach-Tchaouchs, pris parmi les plus capables de l'armée régulière. Au point de vue de la discipline et de l'instruction la gendarmerie dépend du Ministère de la Guerre. Elle est entretenue et soldée aux frais du vilayet. La solde des officiers ne pourra être inférieure à celle des officiers du même grade de l'armée régulière.

Note d'Abedin Pacha (textuel).

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 34, Titre XVII, Art. 309.

Chapitre VII.—*Prisons.*

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 53, Art. 10.

Art. 22. Dans les prisons, les individus arrêtés et soumis à la détention préventive ne devront pas être confondus avec les individus incarcérés à la suite d'une condamnation. Les prisons devront offrir aux détenus les conditions indispensables d'hygiène, et on veillera à ce qu'ils ne soient pas soumis à des traitements vexatoires

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 53, Art. 11.

Les Valis nommeront les Directeurs et les gardiens des prisons, parmi lesquels il y aura un certain nombre d'agents de police et de gendarmes.

Chapitre VIII.—*Comité d'Enquête Préliminaire.*

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 53, Arts. 11 et 12.

Art. 23. Les Valis établiront dans les chefs-lieu des vilayets et des sandjaks des Comités d'Enquête Préliminaire composés d'un Président et de deux membres, Musulman et non-Musulman.

Ces Comités auront pour mandat de s'enquérir des raisons qui ont motivé l'arrestation des prévenus par les gendarmes et d'ordonner qu'ils soient immédiatement interrogés et emprisonnés dans le cas où l'acte qui leur est attribué serait de nature à entraîner des pénalités édictées par les lois: de faire mettre en liberté immédiate, sous la surveillance de la police, ceux dont la conduite ne motiverait pas l'application de la loi, de veiller à ce que personne ne soit retenu sans nécessité et illégalement en prison. Ils visiteront dans ce but les prisons et surveilleront la situation des prisonniers.

Les Comités adresseront des Rapports qu'ils remettront aux Valis, indiquant parmi les individus amenés à la police, ceux qui ont été mis en liberté et ceux qui ont été maintenus en état d'arrestation.

Chapitre IX.—*Contrôle des Kurdes.*

Note de la Porte du 3 Octobre, 1880.

Art. 24. Pour l'administration des Kurdes nomades, le Vali aura sous ses ordres, dans chaque vilayet, un Achiret-Memouri. Ce fonctionnaire aura le droit d'arrêter les brigands et autres malfaiteurs et de requérir leur comparution devant les Tribunaux ordinaires.

Il devra avoir sous ses ordres une escorte suffisante, et pourra en outre, requérir l'assistance de la police locale.

Un certain nombre de fonctionnaires placés

sous son autorité accompagneront chaque tribu dans ses migrations annuelles. Ils exerceront sur elle un pouvoir de police, feront arrêter tous les malfaiteurs et les déféreront aux Tribunaux ordinaires. Les limites des campements et pâturages des Kurdes nomades seront nettement déterminées. Les migrations ne devront pas être la cause de dommages pour les habitants des territoires traversés ou occupés provisoirement par les tribus nomades. Si celles-ci commettent quelque empiètement ou excès sur les biens ou les personnes des villageois, toute migration leur sera désormais interdite.

Exemple: Des Circassiens du Caza de Azizie au Vilayet d'Adana, 1880.

Les Règlements existants sur le port d'armes seront strictement appliqués à toute la population Kurde, tant sédentaire que nomade. On s'efforcera d'inculquer aux populations nomades les principes de la vie sédentaire en les accoutumant aux travaux des champs, et à cet effet on leur assignera des lots de terrain dans les localités où leur installation ne pourra nuire à la tranquillité et au bien-être des populations sédentaires.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 18, Art. 137.

Cf. les résultats obtenus par trois Commissions en 1880.

Le droit d'élection et d'éligibilité n'appartient pas aux individus faisant partie des populations non sédentaires ou qui ne sont pas établies à titre définitif et permanent sur le territoire d'un nahié.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 284, Chap. I, Art. 63.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 23, Titre XII, Art. 179.

Chapitre X.—*Cavalerie Hamidié.*

Art. 25. Dans le cas où il serait jugé nécessaire de se servir des régiments de la cavalerie Hamidié en dehors des périodes d'instruction prescrites par les Règlements en vigueur, ces troupes ne pourront être employées et cantonnées que conjointement avec les troupes de l'armée régulière dont elle ne devront par dépasser le tiers.

En temps ordinaire et en dehors du service, les cavaliers Hamidiés ne doivent porter ni uniformes, ni armes. Dans les mêmes cas ils sont justiciables des Tribunaux ordinaires ainsi qu'il est déjà prescrit dans les Règlements Hamidiés en conformité avec les prescriptions en usage pour les Rédifs (Code Militaire Ottoman, Article 14).

Chapitre XI.—*Question des Titres de Propriété.*

Art. 26. Des Commissions spéciales composées d'un Président et de quatre membres, deux Musulmans et deux Chrétiens, seront chargés de reviser les titres et droits de propriété et de redresser les

injustices et les irrégularités qu'elles pourront constater.

Une Commission spéciale élaborera le mode le plus propre à garantir dans l'avenir les droits de propriété.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, pp. 50, 51, 63.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 21, Titre X, Arts. 160, 163, 164.

Chapitre XII.—*Perception des Dîmes.*

Art. 27. Tous les impôts y compris la dîme, seront perçus directement sous l'autorité du Mudir par des Percepteurs élus par les Conseils des nahiés.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 81.

Tous les habitants du nahié sont solidairement responsables du paiement de la totalité de l'impôt qui lui est assigné.

Art. 28. L'affermage des dîmes et la corvée demeurent abolis.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 33, Art. 104.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 10, Arts. 83, 167, et 168.
Note de la Porte, le 3 Octobre, 1880.

Chaque centre administratif, en commençant par le nahié, prélèvera sur les impôts qu'il aura recueillis les sommes nécessaires aux dépenses de son Administration, d'après un budget fixé et approuvé par le Gouvernement. De même l'Administration financière du vilayet prélèvera sur le total des impôts de la province les sommes nécessaires à l'administration du vilayet, y compris les dépenses des travaux publics et de l'instruction publique.

Note d'Abedin Pacha.

La population ne pourra en aucun cas être tenue de fournir gratuitement soit à la troupe, soit aux fonctionnaires en service, le logement et les provisions nécessaires à leur entretien.

Dans le cas de vente forcée pour non paiement des impôts, on veillera strictement à ne pas priver la population des objets de première nécessité ni de ses instruments de travail.

Chapter XIII.—*Justice.*

Art. 29. Il y aura dans chacune des localités du nahié un Conseil des Anciens présidé par le Mukhtar et dont la mission sera de concilier à l'amiable les contestations entre les habitants de la localité.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 34, Art. 107.

Art. 30. Il y aura dans chaque caza, proportionnellement au nombre des nahiés, un nombre suffisant de Juges de Paix nommés par le Ministre de la Justice sur la désignation du Vali. L'un d'eux devra nécessairement résider au chef-lieu du caza. Le tiers des Juges de Paix du caza devront être Chrétiens. Les Juges de Paix Chrétiens seront

placés dans les centres où la population Chrétienne est la plus nombreuse.

Art. 31. Le Juge de Paix connaîtra—

1. En matière criminelle sans appel, des contraventions passibles de peines de simple police et à charge d'appel les délits n'entraînant pas une peine de plus de 500 piastres d'amende et de trois mois de prison.

2. En matière civile sans appel, toute action personnelle, civile et commerciale, jusqu'à concurrence de 1,000 piastres. Et à charge d'appel, les mêmes actions jusqu'à concurrence de 5,000 piastres.

Art. 32. Le Juge de Paix tiendra aussi son Tribunal en conciliation. Il pourra sur la demande des parties désigner des Arbitres pour décider des contestations dont l'objet dépasserait 5,000 piastres. Dans le cas de sentence arbitrale, les parties renonceront à tout appel.

Art. 33. Les Juges de Paix tenant lieu de Tribunaux de cazas, les appels de leurs décisions en matière civile seront portés devant le Tribunal du sandjak.

Art. 34. Les condamnations à la prison prononcées en dernier ressort par les Juges de Paix seront purgées dans la prison du caza. Les Mudirs devront prêter assistance aux Juges de Paix pour l'exécution des sentences au civil comme au criminel.

Art. 35. Les Tribunaux du caza étant supprimés, les Tribunaux du sandjak connaîtront des affaires civiles dépassant 5,000 piastres, et des appels des décisions des Juges de Paix en matière civile. Ils n'auront qu'une Chambre Civile, la Chambre Criminelle devant être remplacée par la Cour d'Assises ambulante. Les Tribunaux du sandjak sont composés d'un Président Magistrat diplômé, nommé par le Ministre de la Justice, et de deux membres choisis par le Vali sur une liste dressée par les Conseils des sandjaks.

Aristarchi Vol. ii, pp. 292 293, Art. 11
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe p. 28, Art. 25b.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 297, Art. 7

Art. 36. Les sections criminelles des Tribunaux du sandjak sont ainsi remplacées par des Cours d'Assises ambulantes. Les Cours d'Assises sont composées d'un Magistrat Président pris parmi les membres de la Cour Supérieure du vilayet. Il leur sera adjoint deux membres désignés par la Cour d'Appel, parmi les Juges de Paix du sandjak, dont l'un Musulman et l'autre Chrétien. Les Juges de Paix recevront une indemnité spéciale pendant la tournée de la Cour d'Assises.

Note d'Abedin Pacha.

Art. 37. La Cour d'Assises siégera tour à tour

dans tous les cazas, y compris le chef-lieu du vilayet et les chefs-lieux des sandjaks où sa présence sera reconnue nécessaire. Elle connaîtra, en appel, des décisions des Juges de Paix en matière de délit et sans appel, des crimes ainsi que des délits entraînant une peine de plus de 500 piastres d'amende et plus de trois mois de prison.

Les sentences rendues par la Cour d'Assises en matière de crime ne sont susceptibles que du recours en cassation.

Art. 38. En arrivant au caza le Président de la Cour d'Assises se fera remettre par le Juge d'Instruction un État des causes instruites susceptibles de lui être déférées immédiatement, et un État des causes en cours d'instruction. S'il constate au sujet de ces dernières quelques irrégularités ou des lenteurs non-motivées, il adressera immédiatement un Rapport au Ministère de la Justice.

A son arrivée au caza, comme à son départ, la Cour d'Assises visitera les prisons, s'enquerra de la situation des prisonniers, et vérifiera les écrous.

Art. 39. La Cour Supérieure du Vilayet est composée d'un Président et d'un nombre de membres suffisant pour connaître des affaires civiles qui lui sont dévolues, et pour fournir des Présidents aux Cours d'Assises ambulantes.

Elle fonctionne en matière civile, comme Cour d'Appel, et en matière criminelle comme Cour d'Assises. Elle est régulièrement constituée dès qu'elle réunit deux membres et un Président. Elle comprend en outre un Procureur-Général et un nombre suffisant de Substituts.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 56, Art. 26.

Art. 40. Les décisions des Juges de Paix, et les Jugements des Tribunaux de tout ordre seront libellés en langue Turque. Le texte Turc sera suivant les localités et les parties en cause, accompagné d'une traduction en langue Arménienne.

Inclosure 3 in No. 86.

ARTICLE 14. Le Mudir et les membres du Conseil seront élus parmi les habitants qui ont les qualités énoncées dans les Articles 10 et 11; ainsi, si le cercle est composé d'un seul village, ses habitants se réunissent à un jour fixe, et font l'élection du Mudir et des membres du Conseil; et si le cercle est composé de plusieurs villages, ceux des habitants de chaque village qui jouissent de la considération et de la confiance du public, réunis au chef-lieu du cercle, choisissent le Mudir et les membres du Conseil.

Article 16. Les Mudirs seront changés toutes les deux années, et les membres seront changés chaque année en moitié. Le Mudir et les membres pourront être réélus. Si les membres du Conseil seront moitié Musulmans et moitié non-Musulmans, ils seront aussi changés en moitié et leurs successeurs seront pris parmi ceux qui appartiennent à leur classe.

Article 17. Si le poste du Mudir et de membre reste vacant, pour accomplir le reste de leur service ils seront nommé à leur place ceux qui ont eu le plus de voix au moment de l'élection.

Chapitre IV.—*Attributions du Président et des Membres du Conseil.*

Article 20. Les Conseils des cercles se réuniront au moins deux fois par semaine.

Article 21. Le Mudir est chargé de l'exécution sur l'avis du Conseil des ordres et instructions qui lui seront délivrées par le chef-lieu du district dont relève le Cercle Communal; il portera en outre à la connaissance des habitants les ordres supérieurs; il fera un Rapport et le transmettra au Caïmacam du district dont relève le cercle, dans lequel il mentionnera les demandes des habitants, et le résultat des enquêtes préparatoires qu'il exécutera en cas qu'un crime aura été commis dans le village; il procédera aussi, avec le concours des habitants, à l'arrestation des coupables de crime lorsqu'il n'y a pas de gendarmes dans ces endroits, et les enverra au chef-lieu du district.

Article 22. Les Conseils Communaux auront à aviser aux moyens assurant le maintien des bons rapports parmi les habitants, pourront résoudre à l'amiable les procès civils de peu d'importance, et procéder à la réconciliation en cas qu'une rixe aurait éclatée parmi les habitants. Cependant, ils n'auront pas le droit de procéder à l'examen des procès du ressort des Tribunaux, et d'arranger à l'amiable les procès concernant les crimes et les délits. Si l'on constatait l'apparition de brigands et de voleurs, et qu'on aurait conséquemment besoin de force publique, les Mudirs des Conseils auront recours à la station militaire la plus proche, ou au Chef de la Gendarmerie qui sera installée conformément à l'Article 28.

Article 23. Les Conseils Communaux ont aussi pour attribution de percevoir des contribuables, et d'envoyer au Gouvernement les revenus du fisc; ils sont donc chargés d'encaisser ces revenus, et de déposer la somme à la caisse du chef-lieu du district; s'ils rencontrent de difficultés dans la perception, ils auront recours aux préposés des revenus du caza; en cas de non-réussite de ces derniers ils demanderont le concours de chef-lieu du caza.

Article 24. Il y aura dans le chef-lieu du Cercle Communal un registre, dans lequel seront inscrits, d'après un Tableau envoyé du caza, les taxes, l'impôt de l'exonération militaire, les dîmes et autres contributions de chaque village.

Article 25. Les Conseils Communaux feront tout leur possible pour encaisser à temps et intégralement les revenus du fisc des villages compris dans le cercle; à la fin de chaque année ils auront à rendre compte de tous les revenus ainsi que des sommes déposées à la caisse du caza.

Article 26. Le Secrétaire du Cercle Communal est chargé aussi des affaires de la comptabilité; il est en outre autorisé de délivrer en cas de besoin de certificats revêtus du secau des membres du Conseil pour des affaires autres que celles concernant la collection des revenus. Les Secrétaires seront admis au service après avoir donné un garant.

No. 87.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 244.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April 18, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Vice-Consul at Diarbekir respecting the state of affairs there.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 87.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Diarbekir, March 26, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to respectfully state the circumstances under which I felt it my duty to address to your Excellency my telegrams bearing dates respectively the 13th, 20th, 23rd, and 25th instant.

A feeling of hostility towards the Christians could be noticed among the lower class of Turks immediately after news of the late affairs in the Sassoon district reached here. This feeling became more marked when it was known that an Ottoman Imperial Commission, accompanied by foreign Delegates, was appointed to investigate the above-mentioned affair at the suggestion of the European Powers.

In the month of Ramazan, when the Moslems are more or less religiously excited, the notorious Sheikh of Zilan arrived here on his way to Mecca, in company with several Kurdish Chiefs, all, I am told, deeply implicated in the late massacre at Sassoon.

This worthy was entertained, as his guest, by Djemil Pasha, a late Governor of Yemen, whose career in that province I need not dwell upon, as it is well known in Constantinople.

The Sheikh was visited reverentially by all classes of Turks, to whom he opened his mind, as I am told, freely, stating that the Armenians were in revolt, and doing their utmost to undermine the Empire, and that the Moslem Kurds appear more religious and patriotic in defending the authority of their Sovereign than the Turks.

These words were evidently uttered, as your Excellency will perceive, with the view of inflaming the passions of the Turks against the Christians, and that they had the desired effect soon become noticeable, as the attitude of the Turks since then has been changed.

The Christians are treated very shamefully in the bazaars, being assailed, insulted, and threatened with extermination. In vain the sufferers apply to the police authorities for redress, as, instead of the offenders being arrested, the applicants are invariably sent away by the Police Commissioner using such language to them as decency forbids me to repeat to your Excellency. This hostility and neglect of duty evinced determinedly by the just-mentioned official naturally encourages the offenders to perpetrate more violent acts, and the panic-stricken Christians in their despair come to me and to the French Consul for help.

It was under these circumstances that a respectable Mahommedan, a friend of mine, when visiting me the other day, told me in the course of conversation that, according to his knowledge, the situation looks gloomy, as he thinks that the relations between the Turks and Christians are very much strained; and I must not omit to state what I was told by a reliable Armenian, who himself overheard the Cadi—a most upright and intelligent functionary—exclaim, "Are they going to make this place another Dansoens?" referring, of course, to the massacre which took place many years ago in that town. My informant added that in saying this the Cadi turned pale and trembled.

The above-stated occurrences, which came to my knowledge day after day, made me to feel that the situation was grave and dangerous. An imprudent word or

action on the part of the Christians may, I am afraid, put the town in flames. I may add that the same view is taken by my colleague the French Vice-Consul, and I have reason to believe that he reported the same to his Excellency M. Cambon, the French Ambassador.

Were it not for the fear of trespassing on your Excellency's valuable time I would state in detail the accounts I am obtaining, time after time, from the districts of Palu and Siliyan. It suffices to say that affairs appear to be worse there than here, and the information received from the Kharput Vilayet shows the same to be the case there. It is only to be hoped that the new Vali, his Excellency Raouf Pasha will be able, by his well-known energy and capacity, to speedily put things in order in that province.

In conclusion, I have, by your Excellency's permission, to suggest that, as an immediate remedy for the present evil, it is most urgently needed that the Commissioner of the Police should at once be dismissed, the Sheikh removed from this place and an effective order be sent from the Porte to the Acting Vali, reminding him of his duty, and of the serious responsibility he incurs in case of a breach of peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 88.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 245.) *Pera, April 18, 1895.*

My Lord,

THE proposals for Armenian reforms which are submitted in my despatch No. 243 of this day, although they do not contemplate the appointment of a Governor-General which is regarded as indispensable by most authorities on the Armenian side of the question, contain provisions which I believe are sufficient to give security for life and property to the Armenians, provided that they can be really enforced. How to effect this is the problem. I have done my utmost to introduce provisions which will enable the Powers to exercise an efficient control, but my colleagues have been afraid that if these were of too stringent a nature it would be impossible to induce the Turkish Government to agree to them without resorting to means which they are unwilling to employ. I insisted strongly on making the nomination of the Vali's subject to the consent of the Powers, but was unable to obtain more stringent provisions on this point than are contained in Article 2 of the Memorandum.

I proposed that the nomination of the members of the Permanent Commission of Control (Article 8 of the Memorandum) should also be subject to the assent of the Powers, but this my colleagues did not consider practicable. They adopted, however, a suggestion I made that the Dragomans of the Embassies should have direct access to the Commission for the purpose of making representations. I have hopes that this provision, if skilfully worked, may give to the Commission something of an international character.

The High Commissioner (Article 7 of the Memorandum), who is to supervise the application of the reforms, is appointed for a limited time only, but it may eventually be possible to make his office a permanent one, and in that case he might exercise some of the functions of a Governor-General.

The Règlement is based almost entirely on Laws and Regulations which are to be found in Aristarchi's "Législation Ottomane," but which have never been put in force or have fallen into abeyance. A few points are taken from the "Project of Law for the European Vilayets of Turkey," "Turkey No. 16 (1880)."

It may, therefore, be assumed that they contain nothing at variance with the principles recognized by Mussulman law or with the interests of the Moslems. The provisions, that at least one-third of the Mutessarifs, Kaïmakams, and Mudirs should be Christians, that a proportion of the gendarmerie should be Christian, that the police should be localized and placed under the control of the Mudirs, whether Christian or Mussulman, ought to enable the Armenian communities to secure themselves against any ordinary attack or pillage.

It cannot be expected, however, that the reforms will be considered adequate by the

No. 88*.

Consul Stevens to the Earl of Kimberley.

(Secret.) *Batoum, April 22, 1895.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram of the 18th instant, I have the honour to report that Mr. Brayley Hodgetts, correspondent of the "Daily Graphic," passed through Batoum yesterday on his way home from Persia and Russian Armenia, and informed me in conversation that an important revolutionary movement was being prepared. He said the funds would be appropriated as stated in your telegram, and that 11,000 stand of arms with ammunition were waiting at Trieste to be shipped, and would probably be introduced into the Armenian provinces by way of the Persian Gulf.

Armenians. No plan that does not put into their hands the domination now exercised by the Turks would satisfy their aspirations.

Our proposals do no more than endeavour to secure for them a position in which they will be able to hold their own against their oppressors and gradually, by their superior culture and intelligence, to win for themselves a position of equality, if not of superiority.

I cannot end this despatch without bearing testimony to the friendly and straightforward manner in which my French and Russian colleagues have dealt with the question of reforms. M. Cambon's experience as Governor-General of Tunis made his opinion especially valuable on questions of administrative detail. M. de Nélidow, as far as I can judge, is sincerely desirous of putting matters in the Turkish provinces on a footing that will content Armenians and secure tranquillity on the frontier. He has frequently told me that the strong feelings as to the position of their co-religionists entertained by the Armenians in Russian territory make it necessary for his Government to support our action, and that they are, moreover, averse to the continuance of a state of things which keeps their frontier in a disturbed state. They are, therefore, prepared to join in pressing reforms, so long as their objects are humanitarian, and do not involve any political changes. I can detect no trace of any *arrière-pensée* in M. de Nélidow's attitude.

I beg leave to bring to your Lordship's notice the valuable assistance I have received from Colonel Chermside. His practical experience has been of great use in the preparation of the Articles of the Memorandum and Règlement, and has been much appreciated by his French and Russian colleagues, M. Margérie and M. Maximow.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 89.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 116.) *Vienna, April 15, 1895.*
My Lord,

COUNT KÁLNOKY said to me the other day that, according to his information, no interest is aroused in Russia over the inquiry into the reported atrocities in Armenia.

There is equal apathy here, where the press, under influences the manipulation of which is suspected, but would be difficult to prove, persistently attributes to English invention and exaggeration the horrors into the truth of which the Commission is now making investigation.

Yesterday the "Neue Freie Presse" published a long account of an audience granted by the Sultan to one of its correspondents, a M. Bacher. Much of this account is devoted to a description of the Sultan's dignified appearance and winning manner, which seem to have fairly mesmerized the impressionable Austrian. He gives, however, what purports to be a verbatim report of His Imperial Majesty's deliberate utterance on the great question of the day, which is as follows:—

"The principle which guides me both in general policy and in questions of administration is moderation coupled with an equitable solicitude excluding absolutely all rigorous measures, towards all my subjects. I trust that my Armenian subjects, who have recently deviated from the paths of fidelity, will end by regretting this, and by giving me proofs of their repentance. The Armenians of my Empire have always found with us aid and protection, and the Notables among them owe their fortune and their position exclusively to the magnanimity of our dynasty. Consequently, I look upon those of my Armenian subjects who have recently, in some measure, contravened their duties, as mistaken men who have allowed themselves to be misled by influences of foreign origin, and I am thoroughly convinced that they will eventually recognize where the truth lies."

The Sultan's words were uttered in Turkish, and were translated into French by Nourim Pasha. The "Neue Freie Presse" adds that they were of course intended as a rectification of the one-sided assertions of the English press.

Another Vienna paper, the "Presse," published yesterday an article written by the now notorious Spaniard Saturnino Ximènes, who states that he is the only person who really knows the truth about the occurrences at Bitlis, and that it was he who first denounced the Vali to the Porte, and who also had Kinzim Bey recalled from his post as Police Director at Erzeroum. He adds that he repeatedly brought to the notice of the Porte the conduct of Noure, the Head of the local police at Van, and that on all occasions his reports were listened to at Constantinople; but as for the so-called horrors at Bitlis, Ximènes says that he was there at the time that they are assumed to have been committed, and that the accounts of them given by the English press are quite untrue. These sensational stories, he insists, were really invented at Constantinople.

I know that the Vienna press enjoys, as a rule, but little general credit; and on that account I but rarely allude to it in my official correspondence with your Lordship. But in the two instances to which I am now referring, of pronounced anti-English sentiment, there is a sufficient spice of interest to induce me to make an exception.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 90.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 144.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 22, 1895, 11 A.M.*

WITH reference to Sir Mortimer Durand's telegram to your Lordship of the 21st instant, respecting the proceedings of Armenians on Russian territory, some statement in Parliament that a rising would alienate the sympathy of England, and render impossible her further interference in Armenian affairs, might have a good effect. I can do but little through Patriarch and Armenians here to discourage such proceedings, which would be fatal to reforms; probably the Committee in London may have some influence.

I have hitherto refrained from speaking to Russian Ambassador on the subject, but I propose now to ask him if he has received any information.

No. 91.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 145.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 22, 1895, 11 A.M.*

THE following telegram, which was received yesterday from Mr. Shipley, should be compared with the depositions transmitted in my despatch to your Lordship of the 27th March, No. 188:—

"At yesterday's sitting the Shiekh of Zilan was examined. He declared that he only knew of last year's events by hearsay, and he denied all connection with tribal Kurds.

"In reply to direct questions which I put to the Sheikh respecting his relations with the ex-Governor-General of Bitlis, and the allegations that it was he who had incited the Kurds to assemble last year in large numbers, nothing further could be elicited from him than the statement that allegations of this nature were calumnies."

No. 92.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 22.)

(No. 146.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 22, 1895, 7·45 P.M.*

VICE-CONSUL HALLWARD reports by telegraph, in reply to my inquiry, of which I informed your Lordship in my telegram No. 133 of the 15th instant, that he should not think it likely that Armenians at Van would attempt a rising, at any rate, until result of Commission of Inquiry is known, and that he can learn nothing to substantiate the report of such a movement.

No. 93.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 160.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April 22, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 211 of the 9th instant, inclosing Reports from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum and Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van relative to the levy of blood-money on the village of Sikhkeh for the murder of two Kurds in its neighbourhood.

According to Mr. Hallward's statement, there has been no case made out against the inhabitants of Sikhkeh of complicity in the murder, and the persons who were known to have been in the company of the murdered men at the time, and who should obviously have been examined in the first instance, were never even interrogated by the authorities.

I request your Excellency to represent the facts to the Turkish Government, and urge that the proceedings may be quashed.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 94.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 23.)

(No. 147.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 23, 1895, 3 P.M.*

I HAVE received the following telegram from Mr. Shipley in reply to a communication from me referred to in my despatch to your Lordship No. 249 of the 20th April:—

"Length of inquiry is largely due to the fact that the Commission has endeavoured from the first, on a damaging piece of evidence being brought against the Government by an Armenian, immediately to destroy or counterbalance it by means of witnesses on its own side.

"From the list of their witnesses furnished last Saturday the Commissioners show signs of being about to close their case.

"Not more than three or four weeks at the most ought to be occupied by the examination of these witnesses, together with those now in Moush who have been proposed by ourselves.

"For the next two or three weeks, therefore, I hardly think anything can be done in the way of united suggestion."

No. 95.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 23.)

(No. 148.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 23, 1895, 3·15 P.M.

RUSSIAN Ambassador, to whom I spoke to-day in regard to the probability of a rising in the Armenian provinces, stated that his Government had taken steps to prevent any supply of arms through Russian territory, and he promised to impress upon them the necessity for increased vigilance.

M. de Nélidoff added most emphatically that his Government would entirely disapprove of any action in support of such a movement on the part of Armenians in Russia.

No. 96.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 149.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 25, 1895, 7·45 P.M.

I HAVE just been informed by the Russian Ambassador that the Reform proposals have been approved by his Government.

No. 97.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 150.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 25, 1895, 8 P.M.

THE publication of Reuter's telegram respecting Armenian rising has much disturbed the Sultan. Very little importance is attached to the telegram at the Porte, and it is looked upon as an Armenian trick to force the hands of the Powers.

Instructions have been sent to contradict the statement and to prosecute the persons responsible for it.

No. 98.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 25.)

(No. 151.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 25, 1895, 8 P.M.

THE Russian and French Delegates at Moosh have telegraphed that the improvement in the attitude of the Commission reported in my telegram to your Lordship No. 145 of the 22nd April has been restricted to matters of mere form; practically, the proceedings of the Commission are conducted in as unsatisfactory a manner as ever.

No. 99.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 248.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 21, 1895.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 182 of the 21st March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, transmitting Protocols 19 to 30 of the Commission of Inquiry now sitting at Moush.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 99.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April* 9, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of despatches which I received on Saturday, the 6th instant, from Mr. Shipley, the British Delegate with the Commission of Inquiry at Moush. In the first of these despatches Mr. Shipley incloses copies of the joint Reports, Nos. 18 to 22 inclusive, drawn up by the Delegates, of the sittings of the 14th to the 19th February. The latter Reports, numbered 23 to 30 inclusive, which have been sent in single copy only, were sent to the French Consul at Erzeroum, and are being transmitted by him to his Ambassador at Constantinople, after copies have been taken by my colleagues and myself for our archives.

Mr. Shipley again gives a careful analysis in his despatches of all the evidence heard, but without drawing any conclusions as to the conduct and probable results of the inquiry. In this connection, however, I have the honour to draw your Excellency's attention to a most important despatch of the Russian Delegate, M. Prjvalsky, accompanying the joint Reports, the contents of which were communicated to me by my Russian colleague verbally on the 7th instant. This despatch contains a weighty and most outspoken criticism of the far from impartial way in which the inquiry is being conducted by the Turkish Commissioners, as well as of the strong pressure brought to bear by the local authorities in order to render it abortive, as far as the eliciting of the truth about the massacres is concerned.

I may say, in conclusion, that the news which reaches me through private channels from Moush entirely confirms M. Prjvalsky's assertions on the latter head, and also as regards the present dejection of the Armenians there, who seem to despair of any good result to themselves from the present investigation.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 99.

Mr. Shipley to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Moush, March* 15, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to you herewith the joint Reports, drawn up by the Consular Delegates, Nos. 18 to 22 inclusive, of the proceedings at the sittings of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry of the 14th, 15th, 16th, 18th, and 19th February inclusive.

Of the above Reports, No. 20, of the 15th February, contains the very important deposition of the Armenian Tavo, one of the leading inhabitants of the village of Semal, a brief summary of which I had the honour to communicate to you in my telegram of the 16th February last.

As will be seen, the account given by Tavo of the flight of the villagers to the Antok Mountain, the burning of the villages by the soldiers, and the attack made by the latter on the inhabitants of Seinal, Shenik, and Ghelié-Guzan do not differ in any very essential detail from that already given by Sako (Report No. 17 of the 13th February).

Tavo, however, adds that no less than twenty persons, all old people and young children, three of whom were members of his own family, perished in the flames; and with regard to this part of Tavo's story, I would note that as he gives the names of some eight persons as having sustained losses similar to his own, he puts it in the power of the Commission to test his veracity, either by producing the persons in question or showing that they are non-existent.

Tavo, it will be observed, affirms equally with Sako that he is ignorant of the reason of the attack upon these villages by the soldiers, with whom up to the very day of which he maintains they were on a friendly footing. You will, however, not fail to notice that Tavo states that he had heard that in the spring of last year the Kurds were saying among themselves that the order had come to exterminate the Armenians, and that an attempt had been made to induce him to pay a sum of money in order to avert the threatened attack.

The above story of Tavo may or may not be true, but the fact that a similar statement has been made by other witnesses since examined shows that a belief that some such order had been issued was certainly prevalent among the villagers.

The leading features of Tavo's statement as to the massacre of priest Ohannes and others by the soldiers at Ghelié-Guzan I have already had the honour to communicate to you in my telegram above alluded to. The details given by Tavo as to the trenches into which, as he alleges, the dead bodies were thrown are very circumstantial, and it will be observed that among those whom he asserts to have met their death with priest Ohannes were two of his own brothers and their two children. I may note that of the witnesses mentioned by Tavo as having been present on that occasion, only Ovak has as yet been produced, with whose evidence I propose to deal later on.

Tavo, it will be observed, maintains that, notwithstanding the assertions of Major Fevzi Effendi (Report No. 9 of 4th February), the inhabitants of Semal were still in their village on the 27th or 28th July (o. s.) last, giving, it will be noticed, the name of Medjid, on-Bashi of Zaptieh, in support of his contention. The date in question is a matter of some importance, as by the Government witnesses brought before the Commission the evacuation in question has been put at a much earlier date, and has, in fact, been advanced as a proof that the villagers were in active rebellion.

According to Tavo, the inhabitants of Semal paid comparatively only a small amount of tribute ("halit") annually to the neighbouring Kurdish Aghas of Sassoon, and were in this respect generally more independent than the neighbouring Armenian villages of Sassoun. It may perhaps be noted that, notwithstanding the payment of this tribute, their relations with the Sassoun Aghas appear to have been fairly cordial. With the nomad Bekiranli Kurds, on the other hand, by whom tribute was also exacted, Tavo states that the inhabitants of his village were in continual dispute. The soldiers sent to protect the villagers against these Kurds do not, according to Tavo, appear to have been of much utility, and the villagers ceased their complaints, finding that greater inconveniences were the only result.

The statement made by Tavo, in reply to a question of the Consular Delegates, viz., that his house at Semal had cost for timber alone some 1,200 piastres, is not without interest, for if Tavo's estimate is a true one, it seems scarcely probable that the villagers would themselves so readily set fire to their villages in the manner suggested by Government witnesses.

Tavo, on this latter point, spoke out, it will be observed, very plainly, his observation being, in fact, about equivalent to saying that the villagers might, with equal reason, have been accused of bayonetting their own women. With regard to Nadir Agha (Report No. 13 of the 8th February) and priest Parsegh (Report No. 11 of the 6th February), Tavo denied that he had ever held conversation with either of them.

In one respect, Tavo's deposition is somewhat unsatisfactory, viz., in the account he gives of the retreat of the villagers and of his own movements on the day of the attack by the soldiers. It is, in fact, almost impossible to understand how, if, as he states, no resistance was at any time offered to the soldiers, the villagers succeeded in making their way to the Antok Mountain, taking with them at the same time their women, children,

and flocks, and in this respect I would again observe that the account given by Erko is more likely to be the true one.

The witnesses heard at the sitting of the Commission of the 16th February last, were the woman Maké, of the village of Spagank, in the Talori district, and the Kurds Ressoul and Abdullah, of the villages of Djerdjas and Melek, in the Khiyan district respectively.

Maké's statement, the substance of which I had the honour to communicate to you in my telegram of the 2nd March last, was a very plain and straightforward one. She asserted that she was an eye-witness of the bayonetting of her husband, and several of her children by the soldiers, and it is to be noted, made no attempt to speak of the losses which other inhabitants may have sustained, of which she said she knew nothing. I may also point out that though Alvarindj is at no great distance from Moush, none of the members of her own family, whose names she gives as residing there, have yet been summoned before the Commission.

The two Kurds, Ressoul and Abdullah, spoke, the former to the murder of his cousin, and the latter to that of his father, by the Armenians of Talori and Kavar. With regard to these murders, I would observe that even granting the fact that they were committed by the Armenians of those villages (as to which the evidence, especially in the case of the Kurd Temish, is not altogether satisfactory), the fact that precisely Tavo should have been among those singled out for accusation appears to be open to the greatest suspicion. Ressoul, it will be noticed, accused him with the others he had named on the sole apparent ground that all Khiyan knew them for brigands, and that they were the chiefs of their villages, the latter being also the reason given by the Kurd Abdullah. It is, moreover, difficult to believe that if the authorities had really suspected Tavo of being guilty of participation in the above crimes, they were so powerless as not to be able to arrest him so far back as the June of last year.

The sitting of the 18th February (Report No. 21) was taken up principally with the confrontation of Tavo with the priest Parsegh, and of Tavo and Sako with Nadir Agha. At the same sitting, the witness Ovak, referred to by Tavo as having been present at the death of the priest Ohannes, was also examined.

The result of the confrontation of the priest Parsegh with Tavo showed very clearly that the statement of the former relative to an alleged conversation with Tavo (Report No. 11 of the 6th February) was false. Under these circumstances the account volunteered by the priest in question at the same sitting, of the death of priest Ohannes, has the appearance of being an ingenious invention, rather than a statement of fact.

With regard to Nadir Agha, it would appear from the statement of Sako that Tavo, notwithstanding his denial, had, in fact, visited the shop of the former at Moush since the events of last year. Sako, however, denied that any such conversation had taken place as that recounted by Nadir Agha (Report No. 13 of the 8th February).

The greater part of the evidence of Ovak, the last of the witnesses examined at this sitting, and who gave an account of his experiences at the camp of the soldiers at Ghelié-Guzan, has already been communicated in my telegram of the 20th February, 1895. With regard to the medical Report on the case of Ovak, communicated to us by the President at the following sitting (Report No. 22) and referred to by me in the same telegram, I am, of course, not able to offer an opinion. Nevertheless, I think that on several points, and especially on the important question of the date of the scars on various parts of Ovak's body, some other independent medical testimony may fairly be asked for, and this in fact is also the view taken by my colleagues. I should also state that on this occasion we renewed our observation to the President as to the immediate necessity of summoning the women referred to by Tavo.

At the sitting of the 19th February (Report No. 22) after the medical Report above referred to, and of which we give a translation in full, had been communicated to us by the President, the evidence of an Armenian named Vahan, of Moush, was taken. The deposition of the latter, who appears to be the person referred to by Taleb Effendi (Report No. 12 of the 7th February) as having given the information respecting the doings of Daoudian, was principally an account of the unsuccessful efforts which, in conjunction with Taleb, he made to effect the capture of Daoudian in the Kavar villages as far back as 1892. The evidence upon which this witness connects various persons of those villages, including Erko and the brother of Tavo, with Daoudian, it will be observed, not of a very convincing nature, while the important conversation, which he alleges he had with the priest Ohannes, of Semal, is, for obvious reasons, likely to remain uncontrolled.

The only other point worthy of note in the evidence of Vahan is the charge brought by the latter against the Armenians of exercising undue influence on witnesses, singling out in particular a certain Mardiros Agha, of the Armenian Administrative Council of

Moush. The only proof, however, which the Delegates were able to obtain from him of the truth of his assertions with regard to the latter, was that such intimidation was evident from what was taking place around him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 3 in No. 99.

Mr. Shipley to Consul Graves.

Moush, March 30, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the joint Reports of the Consular Delegates Nos. 23, 24, and 25 of the proceedings of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry at the sittings of the 20th, 21st, and 22nd February respectively, have been forwarded to M. Bergeron, Consul in charge of the French Vice-Consulate at Erzeroum, and I beg to explain that, owing to the great pressure of work, we have been unable to send more than one copy of each Report.

The deposition of the Kurd Reshid (Report No. 23), who stated that he was a prisoner among the Armenians on the Antok Mountain, would undoubtedly have been of interest as giving an account, from a non-Armenian point of view, of what took place on the mountain in question. It is, however, impossible to attach any credence to it, as, after the statements of Serko, Kiragos, and others confronted with Reshid at the sitting of the Commission of the following day (Report No. 24), it is more than doubtful whether the latter was ever on the Antok Mountain at all, and in any case his own numerous self-contradictions at the confrontation in question would render his evidence open to the greatest suspicion.

Reshid, it would appear, has brothers at Ghelié-Guzan (a fact, however, which he himself, it will be seen, denies), and it is possible that he may have obtained from them, or from other Kurds, material for part of his story, the remaining details being evidently a pure invention.

I should, perhaps, state that two or three witnesses have since given evidence tending to show that Reshid was in reality a resident at Ghelié-Guzan. But apart from the fact that none of these witnesses were confronted with the latter, their statements as to his family and as to his whereabouts during the events in question were so entirely at variance with Reshid's own account as to increase rather than otherwise the doubts as to his veracity.

To the depositions of Serko and Kiragos, both of the village of Ghelié-Guzan (Report No. 25) I have already had occasion to refer in my telegram of the 1st instant, and a perusal of them will, I think, show that they bear out in all essential details the accounts already given by Sako and Tavo (Reports Nos. 17 and 18 of the 13th and 14th February), of the flight of the villagers to the Antok, and of the subsequent attack upon the latter by the soldiers.

A noteworthy feature in the examination of Serko and Kiragos was the freedom with which both of them stated their case to the Commissioners, the last-named in particular, in reply to a question by the President, stating very plainly that the soldiers had come upon them, had massacred them; and it was on that account that he had cause to make his complaint to the Commission.

The most serious of the accusations brought by Serko against the troops is undoubtedly that which refers to the massacre in the Ghelié-San ravine, distant some three or three and a-half hours from Ghelié-Guzan, of a mixed number of fugitives from the villages of Shenik, Semal, and Ghelié-Guzan, who, according to Serko, had gathered together in the ravine in question. Serko's statement no doubt requires further investigation, but it cannot, I feel, be regarded as an unsupported one in view of the fact that he not only gives the names of those who he asserts he knows to have been killed, but also the names of two of the survivors, from whom he states he obtained the account as well. I may observe that although some time has now elapsed since Serko's statement was first made, we have not yet had an opportunity of examining the two witnesses referred to.

The remaining statements of Serko do not call for any particular comment. It will be noticed, however, that he speaks of the priest Ohannes, whom he states he saw going with others in the direction of the camp. His statement, also, that the inhabitants of his village paid on two occasions in 1894 the sheep tax to a representative of the Government

may, in view of the accusation brought against them of having meditated revolt for some time previous to their actual flight to the Antok Mountain, be regarded as worthy of attention.

The chief points in the deposition of Kiragos, the witness above alluded to, are the accounts which he gives of the events in the Avié-Han ravine, and of the burial by himself of the bodies of his two uncles, who, he states, were killed in the Ghelié-San ravine alluded to by the preceding witness, Serko. Kiragos, it will be observed, furnishes in this connection, the name of the wife of one of his uncles, whose evidence when called may prove to be of value in clearing up some of the doubtful points in the account both of Kiragos and Serko.

Kiragos further states that he had found the bodies of two aged females at Ghelié-Guzan, who, according to the witness, had been killed by the bayonet, and who were named Shamé and Huzé respectively, the latter being the mother of a certain Medjlo, actually resident at one of the villages in the Moush plain.

The description which Kiragos gave at the end of his deposition of the condition in which he found his village on his return has already been alluded to by me in my telegram of the 1st instant, and it has since, I may mention, been corroborated by another witness.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 99.

Mr. Shipley to Consul Graves.

Moush, March 31, 1895.

Sir,

REFERRING to my despatch of yesterday's date I have the honour to report to you that the following further joint Reports of the Consular Delegates, Nos. 26 to 30 inclusive, of the proceedings at the sittings of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry, of the 23rd, 25th, 26th, and 27th February respectively, have been forwarded by us to M. Bergeron, Consul in charge of the French Vice-Consulate at Erzeroum.

Artin of Shenik, the witness examined at the sitting of the 23rd February (Report No. 26), to whose evidence I have referred in my telegram of the 1st March last, gives, it will be seen, much the same account of the flight of the villagers to the Antok Mountain as that already given by Tavo and others, with the important exception, however, that he states that his village sustained an attack on the part of the soldiers and Kurds combined.

The account given by Serko of the occurrences in the Ghelié-San ravine (Report No. 25 of the 22nd February), is, it will be seen, confirmed by Artin, and I cannot but think that great importance attaches to the fact that the latter, who gave his evidence with great sobriety of detail, furnishes, equally with Serko, the names of persons killed in the ravine in question, the only difference being that in his case the names so given are those of inhabitants of Shenik, who would be known to Artin as being himself of the latter village.

With regard to the attack by the soldiers on the villagers on the Antok Mountain, the imminence of the danger in which the latter believed themselves to be, may be judged from the fact that the witness, according to his own statement, abandoned his grandchild in order to save himself. Neither the child in question, nor his daughter Shushan, abandoned by its mother on the mountain, have, the witness added, since been seen by him.

I refer to this more particularly, as from subsequent testimony the fact of children having been thus abandoned would seem to have been of no uncommon occurrence.

Artin, it will be observed, states that on his return he found that his village had been entirely burned, and it is perhaps interesting to note with regard to the report that houses had been reconstructed at these villages, that according to Artin the inhabitants did in fact begin to build small huts, abandoning their intention, however, on the failure of the Government to redeem its promise of furnishing them with rations.

Among other statements of Artin may be noticed the estimate he gives of the numbers of tribal Kurds annually coming to their summer pasturages near the villages of Kavur, and which, in the case of those camping near Shenik, Artin puts at some fifty to sixty tents. The witness did not, however, say whether a greater number assembled this year than usual, but it will be observed that he states that the soldiers at Merguemouzan were sent there for the purpose of protecting the villagers against these nomad tribes.

The Kurd Dervish of the village of Hoshkan (not belonging to the nomad Kurds of that name), examined at the sitting of the 25th February (Report No. 27), seems to have been summoned principally to speak to two attacks—the first of which he alleges was made upon himself by a band of Armenians in 1893, shortly after the capture of Damadian; and the second upon his son in 1894 by certain Armenians of Ghelié-Guzan. As far as could be ascertained from the witness, the only steps taken by the authorities with regard to the first of these attacks was that some names were extorted from a priest by Major Fevzi Effendi, and, with regard to the second, which resulted, according to the witness, in the death eventually of his son, his reply to a question of the Consular Delegates amounted practically to the statement that, as his first complaint had remained without result, he did not think it worth while to make a second.

The other witness heard at this sitting was the Armenian named Medjdo, of Ghélié-Gizan, whose evidence, it will be seen, confirmed generally that given by Serko and Kiragos (Report No. 26), and as Medjdo had been summoned by the Commissioners apparently to control the statements made by the latter, his testimony possesses more than usual interest. He states, however, that, although his mother was in fact abandoned in the village of Ghélié-Guzan, he was ignorant of what had since become of her, and had had no conversation with Kiragos, such as that recounted by the latter. For this reason and also because of Medjdo's statements with reference to the visits which he alleges were paid by Kiragos to Talori, the Consular Delegates suggested to the Commission that a confrontation of the two would be desirable. It was, we felt, only just to Kiragos to give him the opportunity of denying or explaining the statement of Medjdo with reference to his connection with Talori, as a visit to the latter place is almost tantamount, from a Turkish point of view, to an accusation of being engaged in actual rebellion.

At the sittings of the Commission of the 26th and 27th February (Reports Nos. 28 and 29), five Kurds were examined, viz., Amo-ben-Meho and Salih-ben-Zoro, of the villages of Latchki and Ghélié-Mansour, respectively; Emin-ben-Khasso, of the Badikanli Kurds; Mirzo-ben-Ali, of the village of Reshki, in the Guendj Sandjak, and Sali-ben-Ali, of Kerih, in the district of Koulp.

All the above individuals spoke to various outrages which they alleged were either committed upon themselves or other Kurds by Armenians, and with reference to the accusations brought by the three first-named, you will not fail to observe that the names of Erko, Sako, Tavo and Serko, all of whom have given evidence before the Commission, appear among those whom they profess to have recognized among the aggressors, though there seems to be considerable doubt whether in the petition originally presented by these Kurds, the above-mentioned names would in all cases be found.

With regard to the outrage referred to by Amo as having been committed by the Armenians at Merghéboti in 1894, it is at least singular that no report on the matter appears to have been drawn up by Captain Mustapha Effendi, in command of the troops at Merghémouzan, though several other acts of atrocity were, it will be remembered, enumerated by that officer in his deposition of the 4th February (Report No. 9).

With reference to the attack alleged by the Kurd Salih-ben-Zaro to have been made on the house of his uncle in 1893, I would only remark that unless the district was already then in a state of open rebellion, which has not yet been alleged, the authorities were singularly remiss in not taking steps to arrest Sako, who is a leading inhabitant of Shenik, and who, whether concerned in the attack or not, seems to have remained quietly in his village until the events of last year.

As regards the deposition of Emin-ben-Khasso, who stated that he was attacked at his summer pasturage by a large band of Armenians, which statement was confirmed by the Kurds Mirzo-ben-Ali and Salih-ben-Ali. I would point out that at the date which all three give, namely, the month of August, and two of them as the 15th (27th), it is very doubtful whether an attack could have taken place under such conditions, as at that time the soldiers were already in the vicinity. But as I had the honour to report in my telegram of the 1st March, even granting the fact that certain Kurds may have been killed by Armenians, which, however, is denied by the latter, and of which the evidence is chiefly that of the Kurds themselves, there has been no independent testimony whatever to show from which side the provocation originally came. In the combat which took place between the Armenians of Shenik and the Velikanli Kurds at the beginning of July last, and which seems to have been one of the first of the serious events of that year, it is stated by Erko (Report No. 7 of the 1st February) that the cause of the combat in question was the retaking by the shepherds of his village from the Velikanli Kurds of the sheep which the latter had stolen in the first instance. This is, of course, a very different version of the matter from that given by the Kurds. Unfortunately, since Erko no Armenian has

apparently been willing to allude to any combats which may have taken place between them and the latter.

At the sitting of the 28th February (Report No. 30), the witnesses heard were the Kurds Omer-ben-Pourto and Ahmet-ben-Hamo, of the village of Ghélié-Mansour, some three hours distant from Ghélié-Guzan. Part of the deposition of the former is, it will be seen, taken up with the story which he gives respecting two Armenians named Tato and Serko, who, according to the witness, furnished him with information respecting the intentions and plans of the Armenians at Talori, and again when on the Antok Mountain. I do not, however, propose to go into this part of his statement, as the evidence of witnesses since examined has given rise to very grave doubts whether Omer-ben-Pourto ever had any such conversation with the two Armenians referred to. His other evidence is, it will be seen, for the most part merely a repetition of the accusations of the acts of outrage and atrocity brought by other witnesses against the Armenians. I may observe that the story that the Armenians set fire to their own houses reappears again in the evidence of this witness, the information this time having been supplied by a Badikanli Kurd whose name does not transpire.

The witness, it will be observed, stated that nobody of his own village had suffered anything at the hands of the Armenians, who, according to him, only attacked tribal Kurds.

This reply is, I would submit, not without a certain interest, in view of the wholesale accusations of brigandage brought by this witness and others against the Armenians.

With regard to the witness Ahmet-ben-Hamo, whose evidence was a repetition almost word for word of that given by Omer-ben-Pourto, the observations which I made in the case of the latter apply equally to the present witness.

It will, however, be observed that he adds that it was Serko and Tato, the Armenians referred to by the preceding witness, who had informed him that the Armenians of Gavar had, by the order of Mourad, burned their houses as a preparatory measure to their intended revolt against the Government. You will also not fail to notice that whereas, according to Ahmet-ben-Hamo, it would appear that Serko and Tato were in this district as recently as about one month back, according to Omer-ben-Pourto, they had already left last autumn for Diarbekir.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

Inclosure 5 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 18 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 14, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin entendu au cours de cette séance est le nommé Tavo, fils de Mardo, de Semal.

Son interrogatoire n'étant pas terminé, les Délégués pensent préférable d'inclure sa déposition en son entier dans le procès-verbal de la séance où elle sera achevée.

(Signé) H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. VILBERT.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 6 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 19 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 15, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin entendu dans la séance de la veille et de ce jour répond au nom de Tavo, fils de Mardo, de Semal, âgé de 40 ans, marié.

Il déclare qu'à la fin de Juillet (v. s.) 1894 les Kurdes Bekranli, réunis aux troupes et venant de Talori, se portèrent sur Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan à une attaque dont les conséquences furent la fuite des habitants de ces trois villages à l'Antok-Dagh. Les villageois de Semal, dont le témoin faisait partie, passèrent à un quart d'heure de distance

de Guéliéguzan. S'ils prirent cette route, c'est parce que toutes les autres étaient fermées par les Kurdes et les soldats. Le témoin dit ensuite qu'ils occupaient également cette voie, mais lui s'est sauvé pendant la nuit. Il ne sait pas comment ont fait les autres villageois. Si les gens de Semal allèrent à l'Antok-Dagh et non à Talori, c'est parce que ce dernier village était très éloigné d'eux, que leurs troupeaux pouvaient trouver à paître dans la montagne, et qu'eux-mêmes pensaient y attendre la suite des événements; ils restèrent deux jours sur les flancs de l'Antok-Dagh avant d'en gagner le sommet. Quant aux habitants de Chenik et de Guéliéguzan, ils n'y vinrent que deux jours après les habitants de Semal qui restèrent éloignés d'eux à une heure de distance environ; là ne se trouvaient d'autres Arméniens que ceux de ces trois villages.

Les villageois, qui avaient emmené avec eux femmes, enfants, et troupeaux et emporté ceux de leurs effets transportables, n'avaient laissé derrière eux aux villages et au moment de la fuite, que des petits enfants, et des vieillards ne pouvant les suivre. Ces derniers, au nombre approximatif d'une vingtaine, auraient, au dire du témoin, péri dans l'incendie allumée par les soldats. Parmi ces vingt personnes, le témoin en cite trois dans sa propre maison: Noubar, parente très âgée; Bedros, garçon de 8 à 9 ans, n'ayant pas toute sa raison; Hanguine, fille de son frère Khatcho, âgée de 5 à 6 ans et malade; plus: deux dans la maison du nommé Tono, deux dans la maison du nommé Chahbégoudan, un dans la maison du nommé Hebo, un dans la maison du nommé Ohan, trois dans la maison du nommé Artin, un dans la maison du nommé Manouk, un dans la maison du nommé Chabegoukazar, un dans la maison du nommé Kazar; il n'en peut dire les noms exacts, et ne se rappelle pas les autres.

Le témoin tient de son frère qui était resté en arrière au moment de la fuite, que les soldats entourèrent Semal et brûlèrent les maisons. Lui-même dit que, quand il y fut rentré plus tard, il trouva dans les cendres de sa propre demeure quelques ossements.

Il n'a pu distinguer qui étaient les soldats venus avec les Kurdes: il sait seulement qu'ils étaient très nombreux.

Il ignore les causes de l'attaque de leur village. Ils avaient le même jour fourni des vivres au détachement de Merguémouzan: le montant leur en fut remboursé lors de l'arrivée d'Abdullah Pacha à Mouch.

Avant leur fuite, les habitants de Semal n'avaient eu aucune querelle avec les Kurdes et n'avaient pas pris part à celle qui se produisit entre les gens de Chenik et les Kurdes Velikanli au sujet d'un vol de moutons, commis au préjudice du nommé Erko, dont le témoin confirme d'ailleurs la déposition sur ce point.

Il raconte qu'au commencement du printemps, mais sans le tenir d'eux-mêmes, les Kurdes disaient: "Un ordre est venu de l'autorité de tuer les Arméniens." Il ajoute que deux ou trois jours avant que son village fut attaqué, l'homme d'Omer Agha, des Bekrauli, le nommé Akbo, lui dit en secret: "L'ordre est venu de vous massacrer: nous le ferons si vous ne donnez pas 30 livres à mon maître." Le témoin refuse en répondant qu'il ne pouvait croire à un pareil ordre de la part de l'autorité.

Soit pendant leur fuite à l'Antok-Dagh, soit pendant les sept jours environ qu'ils y restèrent, il n'y eut entre les Arméniens et les troupes aucun combat. Les habitants de Semal n'étaient pas concentrés dans un seul endroit, mais dispersés par groupes de familles, ayant leurs bestiaux à côté d'eux. A la fin de leur séjour, ils subirent un assaut de la part des soldats, les uns habillés de blanc, les autres de noir. Le témoin ne sait pas si des Kurdes se trouvèrent parmi eux. Les soldats tuèrent quelques-uns des fuyards à coups de baïonnette. Lui-même a vu de ses propres yeux le fils de son cousin, Mano, tué de la sorte par un soldat habillé en blanc, et qui jeta l'enfant sur une pierre. Mais beaucoup de gens disaient que leurs enfants avaient été tués par les soldats sur l'Antok-Dagh.

A la suite de cet assaut, les Arméniens se dispersèrent dans des directions différentes: ceux de Chenik vers Koulp, ceux de Guéliéguzan, le témoin ne sait pas où. Quant à lui, avec ceux de Semal, il s'enfuit vers Sassoun; s'ils ne prirent pas une autre direction, c'est qu'ils avaient entendu dire qu'il y avait des troupes du côté de Koulp et qu'en outre ils ne connaissaient pas la route de Talori.

Les gens de Semal avaient pu emmener avec eux une certaine partie de leurs moutons, habitués aux rochers de la montagne et qui leur furent pris ensuite par les Kurdes de Sassoun. Après avoir passé une nuit dans les bois, ils revinrent vers la montagne de Guéliéguzan et n'allèrent pas à Shatakh, ayant appris que le Caïmacam s'y trouvait avec des troupes. Le lendemain, après avoir tenu conseil, le prêtre de Semal, Ohannès, accompagné de 300 personnes environ, y compris les femmes et les enfants, se dirigea vers Guéliéguzan pour se rendre aux troupes qui y étaient campées. A mi-chemin, malgré les assurances du prêtre, lui affirmant que les soldats ne font rien à ceux qui se rendent, le témoin cédant à la peur, s'enfuit avec trois villageois qu'il avait persuadés et

qui se nomment Mardiros, actuellement à Semal; Ohannès, fils de Kiragos, qui était seul, est porté vers Khinis; Manouk, fils d'Artin, se trouvant dans la plaine de Moush. Ils se rendirent alors dans la direction de Sassoun, restant dans les montagnes et les bois pendant seize jours, au bout desquels ils gagnèrent le village de Perah dans la plaine de Mouch. Le témoin malade, y passa un certain temps qu'il ne peut préciser et retourna ensuite à Semal.

Le prêtre Ohannès, ayant atteint le camp de Guéliéguzan, y fut, sur l'ordre du Mir-Alay (Colonel) tué à coups de baïonnette, après avoir eu les yeux arrachés et avoir été tourné en dérision. Les femmes et les enfants furent séparés des hommes, dont un certain nombre périrent sous la baïonnette et dont les corps furent jetés dans des fosses. Quelques-uns réussirent à gagner la forêt. Plusieurs femmes furent déshonorées; les autres furent épargnées, ainsi que les enfants; mais quelques-uns moururent de peur.

Le témoin dit ensuite qu'aucun des hommes qui accompagnait le prêtre Ohannès ne put s'échapper à l'exception d'un certain Ovak, et sur l'observation du Président, affirme ne pas se rappeler avoir dit précédemment que quelques-uns d'entre eux avaient gagné la forêt.

C'est ce même Ovak, fils de Merké, de Semal, qui lui a raconté l'histoire de la mort du prêtre Ohannès, avec lequel il était, et qui lui a dit que vingt hommes avaient été tués là par les soldats à coups de baïonnette.

Ovak lui-même, qu'on avait cru mort et qui avait seulement de nombreuses blessures, est ensuite revenu à Semal, et se trouve maintenant à Perták, où le témoin l'a vu. Il propose de l'amener devant la Commission qui pourra l'interroger sur ces événements.

Le témoin a vu lui-même les fosses remplies de cadavres à Guéliéguzan et en peut montrer l'emplacement: l'une est derrière la maison de Bedo, et l'autre non loin de l'endroit où campaient les soldats. Le témoin y est allé avec un nommé Mikhail pour y chercher le cadavre du prêtre Ohannès. Ils ne le trouvèrent pas dans la grande fosse qui était pleine, mais dans la plus petite, et le reconnurent à sa barbe, comme ils reconnurent à leurs vêtements les nommés Mardiros, Cherko, et Serko. Le témoin ne peut préciser la date, mais les troupes étaient encore à Semal. La première fois qu'il alla à la plus grande des deux fosses, il y vit un grand nombre de cadavres; mais depuis les bêtes fauves les ont dévorés; il en reste encore néanmoins.

Invité à désigner ces femmes qui étaient avec le prêtre Ohannès à Guéliéguzan, il nomme les suivants, qu'il croit dans les villages de la plaine de Mouch, il ne sait pas au juste: Dilo, femme d'Artin, de Semal; Mariam, femme de Cherko, de Semal; Chahbaz, femme d'Hebo, de Semal; Hemo, femme d'Ohan, de Semal; Kharé, femme de Merké, de Semal; Mariam, femme de Kevo, de Semal; Gulé, femme de Serko, de Semal.

Pendant le cours des événements rien n'arriva à la femme et aux deux enfants du témoin: ils sont actuellement en vie. Mais parmi les autres membres de sa famille ont péri: ses deux frères: Bogué, âgé de 43 ans environ; Khatcho, âgé de plus de 50 ans.

Les deux fils de ce dernier: Manuk, âgé de 23 ans; Attam, âgé de 16 à 17 ans, qui tous quatre auraient été tués à Guéliéguzan avec le prêtre Ohannès.

Les deux fils de Bogué, Setrak et Ardesh, âgés de 4 et 6 ans, qui auraient été tués par les soldats et perdant la fuite sur les montagnes de Guéliéguzan; Arshak, garçon de 4 ans, Mermer, fillette de 6 ans, enfants de son frère Kirko, mort en prison à Bitlis, et qui auraient été tués près de Kharzo par les soldats qui y étaient avec le Caïmacam de Sassoun. La mère des deux derniers enfants put s'échapper.

Le témoin affirme que tous ses parents ci-dessus désignés sont bien morts; que l'on fasse une enquête: les zaptiés de Mouch eux-mêmes le savent.

Il ressort des autres déclarations du témoin:—

1. Que le jour de la venue du Tabour-Agassi, Fevzi Effendi, entendu dans la séance du 4 Février (Procès-verbal No. 9), et d'Iskender Agha (séance du 29 Janvier, Procès-verbal No. 4), les habitants de Semal étaient au village, les uns dans les champs, les autres dans leurs maisons. Le témoin peut prouver ce qu'il avance à l'aide de Medjid-Onbachi, entendu dans la même séance qu'Iskender Agha, et qui se trouvait à Semal le 27 ou 28 Juillet (v. s.), 1894, pour le ravitaillement des troupes de Merguémouzan.

Les Délégués Consulaires demandent la confrontation du témoin et du dit Medjid, qui se trouve dans le local de la Commission; mais cette confrontation n'a pas lieu.

2. Que les pâturages d'été des troupeaux de Semal se trouvent sur le Kourtik-Dagh, près de l'endroit nommé Ziaret, où ils sont envoyés au commencement du printemps; que les troupeaux y étaient allés également en 1894, mais qu'au moment de l'arrivée des troupes et des Kurdes, ils avaient été ramenés près du village.

3. Que les Kurdes nomades Bekrauli viennent habituellement à leurs pâturages au

commencement de Juillet, à Pernashen, Kilissa, loin de Semal, mais qu'en 1894 ils n'arrivèrent qu'à la fin de ce mois, du 25 au 27. Le témoin ignore les causes de ce retard. Près de Semal ne campent d'ordinaire que des Bekrauli, au nombre de vingt à trente tentes.

4. Qu'il n'a pas entendu dire que les villages de Tapik, Kiagashin, Chouchnamerg, Akkerm eussent été attaqués; ils avaient pour eux les Aghas Kurdes de Sassoun; en tout cas, les habitants n'en sont pas venus à l'Antok-Dagh; que si Semal n'a pas reçu la même assistance, c'est que, à l'encontre des villageois précités, ils ne se soumettaient pas aux mêmes exigences de "hafir" et ne payaient qu'un faible tribut de 30 ou 40 livres, qui n'a pas été en 1894 versé comme d'habitude à l'automne par suite des événements; mais il l'avait été l'année précédente.

Certains Aghas venaient recueillir ce tribut eux-mêmes; d'autres l'envoyaient chercher et aucune rixe ne se produisait à cette occasion, les relations entre villageois et Aghas étant très cordiales.

Le "hafir" consistait en argent et aussi en produits agricoles, ustensils de travail, &c. Parmi les sept Aghas de Sassoun se trouvaient les suivants: Khankedal Oghlou, Portonen Oghlou, Kharzi-Agha, Melo-Agha, de Kelbastik; Selenin Oghlou, Ibrahim-Agha, d'Argok; Mirzonen Oghlou, Fetto-Agha, de Pivi.

Contre eux les villageois ne portèrent qu'une seule plainte, qu'ils ne renouvelèrent pas à cause des désagréments plus grands qu'elle leur attira. Ces mêmes Arméniens de Kavar ne cessaient, au contraire, d'avoir des difficultés avec les Kurdes Bekrauli contre lesquels ils avaient réclamé deux ou trois ans auparavant. Aucune suite n'ayant été donnée à leur requête, ils télégraphièrent à Constantinople et des soldats furent envoyés à Semal pour en protéger les habitants. Mais pendant que les troupes étaient là, les Kurdes Bekrauli et Karikauli, ayant fait une attaque de nuit, tuèrent un homme de Chenik et volèrent 300 moutons, sans que les soldats les en empêchassent. Les villageois ne renouvelèrent plus leurs réclamations.

Ils paient également le "hafir" à une douzaine d'Aghas des Kurdes Bekrauli parmi lesquels: Omer, Djevhi, Risgo, Hussein.

5. Le témoin nie connaître les actes de brigandage et d'atrocité dont les Kurdes auraient été victimes de la part des Arméniens.

6. D'après lui ne se promenaient armés sur les flancs de l'Antok-Dagh que les bergers porteurs de fusils à pierre, et sa déclaration à ce sujet concorde avec celle du nommé Sako, entendu dans la séance du 13 Février (Procès-verbal No. 18). Il est possible que ces bergers, pour protéger leurs moutons, se soient battus avec les Kurdes; mais le témoin n'a pas vu qu'ils aient lutté avec les soldats; et en tout cas, les villageois de Kavar n'auraient jamais osé opposer de la résistance aux soldats du Gouvernement.

7. Après que les Arméniens eurent fui de l'Antok-Dagh, les troupes demeurèrent à Guéliéguzan, mais postérieurement au meurtre du prêtre Ohannès, elles partirent dans la direction de Khian et Talori.

8. Le témoin dit avoir entendu parler pour la première fois de Mourad par le Lieutenant Ali Effendi, qui vint à Semal lui signala la présence de Mourad à Talori en l'engageant à s'en emparer. Le témoin répondit que Talori était loin et que les villageois ne pouvaient y aller; qu'Ali Effendi en qualité d'officier leur opportât un ordre, les villageois pourraient peut-être l'exécuter et ils livreraient Mourad à l'autorité, si Ali Effendi leur disait qu'il fût à Semal. Le témoin nie qu'il ait existé des relations entre les gens de Kavur et ceux de Talori, qu'aucun de ces derniers soit jamais venus pousser soit Kirko, soit Sako, soit Artin, soit Erko, soit lui-même à prendre les armes, à aller sur l'Antok-Dagh et à marcher sur les soldats.

Quand les troupes étaient à Merguémouzan, soldats et zaptiés venaient constamment à Semal. Le Caïmacam de Sassoun, accompagné de zaptiés, y passa dix-sept jours au mois de Juin, pour y déterminer l'emplacement du camp des troupes destinées à protéger les villageois contre les Kurdes.

9. Le témoin a entendu raconter par la femme d'un de ses parents, Ossep, qui a été tuée, la nommée Alé, que leur petite fille Anko, âgée de 4 ans, avait été prise par un Lieutenant qui accompagnait le Caïmacam (de Sassoun) et avait mis l'enfant avec les siens propres. Une fois arrivé le Muchir Pacha, dont la venue procura aux Arméniens un peu de tranquillité, cette enfant fut rendue à sa mère, par l'entremise d'un Kurde de Tapik, nommé Mirzo, fils de Khano, et contre le paiement de 3 medjidiés. La mère et l'enfant se trouve actuellement à Semal.

Interrogé à propos des dépositions précédentes et relatives à lui-même et à son village, le témoin donne les explications suivantes:—

(*a.*) En effet, les Arméniens se trouvant sur l'Antok-Dagh y allumaient des feux; mais il nie de façon formelle qu'il se soit produit là une lutte de dix jours avec les soldats

et se déclare prêt à le répéter en face d'Erko; celui-ci est prisonnier, et ressemble à un homme ivre et privé de sa raison.

(*b.*) If repousse de façon non moins catégorique l'affirmation tendant à établir que les Arméniens auraient incendié leurs propres maisons avant de se rendre à l'Antok-Dagh, et ajoute: "Si nous avons brûlé nos maisons, qui nous a tués à coups de baïonnette?"

(*c.*) Les villageois avaient caché au printemps et selon leur habitude les meilleurs de leurs effets, par crainte des Kurdes nomades. Les troupes étant encore à Semal, et Moustapha Effendi (entendu le 4 Février, Procès-verbal No. 9) l'y ayant autorisé, il retira d'une des fosses seulement deux tapis et des sacs. Contrairement à l'affirmation de Moustapha Effendi, il n'en fit sortir rien d'autre et cette fosse ne se trouvait pas dans les champs.

(*d.*) Le témoin dit connaître l'existence à Mouch de deux personnes répondant au nom de Nadir, mais il n'a de relations avec aucun des deux, qui ne font ni l'un ni l'autre commerce avec son village.

(*e.*) Contrairement à l'affirmation de Nadir Agha (entendu dans la séance du 8 Février, Procès-verbal No. 13), les Arméniens n'ont pas l'habitude de brûler leurs maisons et de les reconstruire plus loin; il n'ont pas de forêt dans le voisinage, et le témoin lui-même a payé rien que pour la charpente de sa maison la somme de 1,400 piastres.

(*f.*) Le témoin ne connaît pas le prêtre Parsegh (entendu dans la séance du 6 Février, Procès-verbal No. 11) et ignore si ce dernier a envoyé à Semal des lettres d'exhortation.

(*g.*) Il n'a pas reçu davantage de conseils d'Ali Effendi, qui venait parfois à son village pour le ravitaillement des troupes.

Au cours de son interrogatoire, le témoin se plaint à différentes reprises d'être questionné sur des points de détail; puisque la Commission est ici de la part du Gouvernement pour chercher la vérité, qu'elle vienne dans les villages voir par elle-même les maisons brûlées et les champs dévastés.

Le Président lui répond que l'enquête sera menée avec une impartialité complète et que la Commission se rendra soit à Semal, soit dans tous les endroits qu'elle jugera nécessaires; mais il doit recueillir du témoin, comme d'un des principaux de son village, et qui n'a qu'à les fournir sans aucune contrainte, les éclaircissements possibles.

Sur la demande des Délégués Consulaires le Président décide que le témoin accompagnera à titre d'indicateur le fonctionnaire chargé d'aller au village de Pertak pour y chercher le nommé Ovak, dont il a été question au cours de la séance, et l'amener devant la Commission.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. VILBERT.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 7 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 20 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 16, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le premier témoin entendu est la femme Maké, du village de Spagank, district de Sassoun, veuve du nommé Erko, fils de Marko, et actuellement hospitalisée à Alvarindj.

Ayant appris des Kiahias de ce village l'arrivée à Mouch de la Commission, elle est venue d'elle-même, il y a quatre jours, pour lui présenter sa plainte.

Invitée à l'exposer, elle raconte que pendant le jeûne de la Fête de la Vierge (Marium-Periz) au mois d'Août 1894, des soldats, parmi lesquels il n'y avait pas de Kurdes, attaquèrent le village de Spagank; les habitants se trouvaient dans leurs pâturages très rapprochés.

Le témoin lui-même était dans sa maison avec son mari et ses enfants; les soldats y mirent le feu et tuèrent deux enfants qui y étaient restés; un troisième fut tué en même temps que son père qui s'était enfui dans les rochers avec sa femme et le reste de ses enfants.

Les enfants qui succombèrent se nommaient: Artin, garçon de 12 ans, fiancé; Kirkor, garçon de 5 ans; Khatchador, garçon de 4 ans.

Quant aux quatre autres: Kazar, Saro, Arutos, Agop, le témoin ne les a jamais revus; il a perdu plus tard une petite fille nommée Khazo au village d'Alvarindj.

Le témoin interrogé sur les personnes qui se trouvaient présentes au moment du

meurtre de ses enfants, répond : "Moi, je les ai vus ; on les a tués à coups de sabre et de baïonnette." Elle ne sait rien pour les enfants des autres ; elle-même s'est cachée dans les racines d'un arbre.

Son village, qui se composait de trois quartiers séparés, a été complètement brûlé. Les habitants s'enfuirent dans des directions différentes ; un grand nombre se trouve actuellement dans les villages de la plaine de Mouch ; elle-même ayant erré pendant vingt jours dans les montagnes, ne trouvant rien pour se nourrir, a mis huit jours pour atteindre Alvarindj, où sont ses frères, Serkis, Beslo, et Tenn ; sa mère Khanné, ses deux belles-sœurs Eguissa et Bulbul.

Le témoin nie que des gens de Talori soient venus exciter ceux de Spagank à prendre les armes et à se retirer dans les montagnes, que quelqu'un de Talori se soit trouvé parmi eux au moment de l'attaque des soldats, que les villageois de Spagank aient eu des armes, et qu'ils aient lutté avec les soldats arrivés brusquement sans que le témoin en sache la cause et en ait été averti autrement que par le son du clairon.

Des explications complémentaires du témoin il résulte :—

Que le village de Spagank est situé environ à trois heures de Talori, dont il est séparé par un ravin, et dont les troupeaux viennent boire aux mêmes sources ; que Talori a eu le même sort que Spagank ; que les villageois par crainte des voleurs ont l'habitude chaque année de cacher ceux de leurs effets ayant quelque valeur dans les fosses ; que comme le relate sa pétition remise à la Commission, le témoin a perdu : 150 moutons, 4 bœufs, 4 vaches, et 100 piastres, le tout ayant été pris par les soldats.

Le second témoin entendu est le nommé Ressoul-ben-Merdjo, Kurde Khianli du village de Djerdjas, âgé de 30 ans, marié

Il explique que, depuis la capture de Dounaïan, les routes conduisant de Khian à Mouch par les villages de Kavar étaient coupées par les brigands Arméniens qui depuis deux ans ne laissaient passer personne.

Plainte de ce fait avait été portée par les Kurdes à la connaissance de l'autorité de Passour, qui était, d'ailleurs, parfaitement au courant comme celle de Mouch.

Dans les premiers jours de Juin 1894 (v. s.), le cousin du témoin, nommé Temishben-Mohammed, se rendait seul à Mouch, quand à Havars, endroit situé entre Semal et Guéliéguzan, il fut tué par des Arméniens de Kavar et de Talori. Son cadavre fut mutilé, l'abdomen rempli de poudre à laquelle on mit le feu, et les assassins se partagèrent les effets personnels du mort. Les Musulmans de Guéliéguzan nommés Mehu, Risgo, Veli, Rako, ayant donné la nouvelle à Khian des gens allèrent de nuit chercher le cadavre que le témoin vit lui-même et qui fut enterré dans le village.

La mère de Temich montra les habits du mort au Mutessarif de Guendj ; plainte fut portée au Caïmacam de Passour, qui ne pouvait rien faire puisque lui-même, chassé d'Akkesser par 360 Arméniens armés de fusils, avait été poursuivi par eux jusqu'à Passour.

Dans sa plainte de ce jour, comme dans sa plainte originelle, le témoin accuse du meurtre de son cousin les nommés Guébro, fils de Tono ; Boghos, fils de Mano ; Murdo, fils de Boké ; Mikhaïl, Sako, Ohan, Ilo, ces quatre derniers de Chenik, et Tavo et Boghos de Semal.

Invité à motiver l'accusation qu'il porte contre les individus précités, le témoin répond que l'affaire n'est pas secrète, que tout Khian connaît ces gens comme des brigands et que s'il les accuse maintenant, c'est parce qu'ils sont les Chefs de village.

Il mentionne à l'appui de ses dires l'attaque faite cette même année 1894 sur les Kurdes Velikanli, dont trois hommes furent tués et l'impossibilité pour le Mutessarif de faire venir auprès de lui ces mêmes villageois qu'il avait plusieurs fois appelés.

Le troisième témoin est le Kurde Abdullah-ben-Selim, du village de Melek, dépendant de Khian, âgé de 25 ans, marié.

Confirmant la pétition en date du jour même, 4 Février (v. s.), 1895, dont est donnée lecture par le Président, il raconte la mort de son père, tué par les Arméniens de Kavar et de Talori dans les circonstances suivantes :

En Juillet 1894, un Kurde nommé Mollah Ressoul, venant de Diarbekir à ses pâturages d'été Khizan, sur le Kourtik-Dagh fut attaqué à la bifurcation des routes de Khian, non loin des pâturages Tchapar, par les gens des villages précités. Vingt ou trente Kurdes Bekranli s'étant portés à son secours, le père du témoin nommé Sélim qui était dans sa maison non loin de là, se rendit auprès des Arméniens pour les engager à cesser. Il fut assailli par eux et son corps resta exposé au soleil de vingt à vingt-huit jours, sans que les Arméniens permissent de l'emporter. Au bout de ce temps, un villageois de Hulorink nommé Temo et le Kurde Khazo, domestique de Hichman Agha, étant allé, pendant la nuit recueillir les restes de Sélim, les apportèrent au témoin. Dans le combat qui eut lieu après la mort de Sélim entre les Kurdes au nombre de soixante-dix environ et

les Arméniens de Kavar et de Talori, trois fois plus nombreux, six Kurdes furent tués. Le témoin ignore combien les Arméniens ont perdu d'hommes. Le témoin porta plainte alors au Mutessarif de Guendj, mais ne connaît pas la suite donnée par l'autorité.

Il réclame aujourd'hui contre les villages de Talori, de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan, tout entiers.

Invité à répéter les noms mentionnés dans sa plainte, il spécifie : Bedros, fils de Djouro ; Guspard, fils de Serkechich ; Mikhaïl, fils de Kechich ; le fils de Mardo, de Semal, le fils d'Avo, et motive cette accusation par cette seule raison, c'est que ce sont les Chefs de village.

Le Président donne lecture ensuite d'un procès-verbal, dressé par le Commissaire de Police de Mouch, qui constate que, s'étant rendu avec le nommé Tavo, de Semal, au village de Pertak, pour y chercher le nommé Ovak, fils de Merké, il n'y a pu trouver l'individu en question et que les villageois n'ont jamais vu personne de ce nom, ainsi qu'il ressort de la déclaration signée par eux et annexée au dit procès-verbal.

Tavo confirme cette constatation en ajoutant que les villageois lui ont dit ne pouvoir être informés exactement des 200 ou 300 personnes ayant passé par leurs villages.

Tavo affirme de nouveau y avoir vu quinze jours auparavant le nommé Ovak et dit que si la Commission lui en laisse la liberté, il se charge en quelques jours de le lui amener.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. VILBERT.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 8 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 21 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 18, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le Président ayant annoncé que les confrontations de nommés Nadir Agha et Porsegh Effendi avec le nommé Tavo allaient avoir lieu, les Délégués font observer, qu'il y aurait en intérêt à ce qu'elles se produisissent le jour même où les contradictions ont résulté de témoignages opposés.

Les nommés Parsegh et Tavo étant mis en présence, le Président rappelle au premier sa déposition du 6 Février, 1895 (Procès-verbal No. 11), aux termes de laquelle il aurait entendu dire par Tavo que le nommé Erko avait été blessé, non par les soldats, mais par les Kurdes, et sa déclaration que lui-même Parsegh auraient envoyé dans les villages Arméniens des lettres d'exhortation et de conseils. Tavo nie totalement ces faits, sur quoi Parsegh fait demander par le Président si Tavo le connaît.

Tavo répond négativement et ajoute l'avoir vu la veille pour la première fois au bureau de police.

Parsegh fait alors poser la question si pendant qu'il était de service à l'église Arménienne à Mouch, Tavo n'y a pas passé cinq nuits et ne lui a pas fait alors certaines déclarations en présence du gardien Manouk. Celui-ci dit qu'en effet, lorsque Parsegh était de service, Tavo est venu l'hiver précédent (1893-94) pendant trois ou cinq jours ramasser du pain à l'intention de son frère, alors détenu à Mouch, mais que lui Manouk n'a pas vu Tavo s'aboucher avec Parsegh et qu'il n'a pas revu depuis lors son cousin Tavo.

Parsegh demande alors la comparution de l'officier de police, Méhémet Effendi, qui confirmera ses dires. Le dit Méhémet appelé devant la Commission ne peut dire que ceci : le prêtre Parsegh et le gardien Manouk étant venus le trouver la veille pour lui faire une déclaration, il a refusé de les écouter en leur déclarant que la police n'était pas un Tribunal.

Le gardien Manouk rappelé dit avoir été invité la veille à se rendre à la police par un zaptié qu'il ne pourrait reconnaître, et y avoir fait la même déclaration que celle qu'il a fait tout-à-l'heure devant la Commission.

En ce qui concerne les lettres de conseils expédiées par lui, Parsegh dit en avoir envoyé une au prêtre de Semal, nommé Ohannès, et parent de Tavo. Il ajoute de lui-même que ce prêtre a été tué dans les circonstances suivantes. Au moment où les villageois de Chenik et Semal étaient réunis à l'Antok, le prêtre Ohannès en prit quelques-uns avec lui sous prétexte d'aller se rendre aux troupes qui étaient près du Kourtik-Dagh

mais en réalité pour s'assurer du nombre des soldats et le faire savoir aux Arméniens rassemblés. Partis deux heures après le coucher du soleil, et rencontré en route par les Kurdes Khianli et Bekranli, il fut tué au cours de la rixe qui se produisit. Ces incidents qui auraient eu lieu alors que les deux compagnies de Merguémouzan étaient seules à Kourtik, les autres troupes n'étant venues que deux ou trois jours après, lui ont été racontés par les nommés Avédis, Kéchich Oghlou, d'Agpik, Erko, de Chenik, autre que celui entendu dans la séance du 1er Février (Procès-verbal No. 7) et enfin par Tavo lui-même.

Tavo nie avec la plus grande violence et jure n'avoir jamais tenu de semblables propos à Parsegh. Il affirme que le prêtre Ohannès, qui était son oncle, a été tué par les soldats et que les gens blessés aux côtés de ce dernier sont en fuite. Il ajoute que le nommé Ovak qui se trouvait avec le prêtre Ohannès, est à Mouch et dans le local même de la Commission.

Le Président décide la comparution d'Ovak dans la séance du jour.

Nadir Agha, introduit, ayant confirmé la déposition qu'il avait faite dans la séance du 8 Février, 1895 (Procès-verbal No. 13), au sujet de ses conversations avec Tavo, soit dans sa maison à lui, en présence des nommés Sako, Cherko, et Ali Effendi, soit à Semal, où il s'était rendu dans la propre demeure de Tavo, celui-ci nie formellement avoir eu des relations personnelles avec Nadir, qui n'est jamais venu chez lui à Semal.

Le nommé Sako, alors introduit, dit être venu une seule fois l'automne dernier en compagnie d'Erko et de Tavo pour une question d'approvisionnement chez Nadir, où ne se trouvait pas Ali Effendi, et où ne fut tenue aucune conversation dans le genre de celles qui leur sont prêtées par Nadir. Ce dernier depuis longtemps n'est pas venu à Chenik dont, il y a trois ans, il avait affermé les dîmes pour la perception desquelles il se faisait remplacer par son fils.

Nadir, entre autres réponses, prétend y être allé l'année dernière et y avoir passé une semaine dans la maison du nommé Kirko.

Est introduit le nommé Ovak dont Tavo certifie l'identité.

Ovak dit être du village de Semal, ne pas savoir son âge (il paraît de 15 à 17 ans). Le nom de son père est Merké.

Il ressort de ses déclarations que quand les soldats prirent son village, ils s'enfuit dans les montagnes où il se cacha dans les rochers pendant longtemps—il ne peut dire le nombre de jours. S'étant rencontré avec le prêtre Ohannès, qu'accompagnaient des hommes, des femmes, et des enfants, il se joignit à eux pour aller au camp. Là les soldats s'étant emparé du prêtre, lui crevèrent les yeux, le tournèrent en dérision, jetèrent son cadavre dans une fosse et de la poussière par dessus.

Ovak dit avoir vu de ses propres yeux ce qu'il raconte. Ensuite les Arméniens frappèrent les autres Arméniens qui se sauvaient vers Guéliéguzan. Le témoin lui-même blessé à coups de baïonnette tomba et se cacha sous deux cadavres. Il s'enfuit ensuite dans les bois où il fut rencontré par sa mère, qui le mit à l'abri dans les broussailles et le nourrit pour un temps qu'il ne peut déterminer de pain et de blé.

Il revint avec elle à Semal puis dans la plaine de Mouch où elle le laisse, partant avec deux autres enfants, un petit garçon et une petite fille, dans la direction de Diarbékir.

Le témoin dit que son frère fut tué à Guéliéguzan, mais ne sait pas, s'étant enfui, s'il y a eu combat ou non.

Bien que pressé de questions par le Président, il affirme ne pas savoir ni le nom des villages de la plaine par lesquels il a passé ni le nom des gens qui l'ont reçu. Il est venu à Mouch, il y a bon sept jours, où il mendie et couche dans une écurie qu'il ne peut désigner.

Il a vu Tavo hier seulement et lui a parlé. Il l'avait rencontré quinze jours auparavant dans la rue d'un village qu'il ne peut désigner.

La Commission décide l'examen médical des blessures d'Ovak.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. VILBERT
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 9 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 22 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 10, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le Président donne lecture du rapport médical dressé en date du 7 Choubat, 1310 (19 Février, 1895) par MM. le Capitaine Bessim Bey, Médecin attaché à la Commission d'Enquête; le Capitaine Vassif Bey, Médecin du Régiment de Cavalerie; le Dr. Margueritti Saridi, Médecin de la Municipalité de Mouch, chargés de l'examen des blessures du nommé Ovak, entendu dans la séance précédente. La traduction de ce document est jointe en annexe au présent procès-verbal.

Le Président fait observer que d'après ce rapport, les blessures du dit Ovak n'auraient pas été causées par la baïonnette mais seraient le résultat de pointes de fer remontant à deux mois, au plus.

Le témoin entendu, nommé Vahan, Arménien Grégorien, fils de Vartan Agha, Notable de Mouch, âgé de 33 ans, et chargé précédemment de missions officielles temporaires par les autorités locales, dépose qu'ayant en 1308 (1892) eu mission de l'Épiscopat de Nersès à Mouch, appris le départ de Damadian pour les montagnes et le district de Kavar, c'est-à-dire Chenik, Semal, Guéliéguzan, il en donna le nouvelle à Taleb Effendi, entendu dans la séance du 7 Février, 1895 (Procès-verbal No. 12), et au Mutessarif de Mouch, qui chargea ce dernier d'aller vérifier l'exactitude de cette dénonciation. Le témoin, de sa propre initiative, se joignit à Taleb, et tous deux partirent pour Kavar, où ils passèrent environ trois semaines.

Des longues déclarations du témoin il résulte que leur essai de capturer Damadian demeura infructueux; que dans le village de Kop, dépendant du district de Shatakh, le nommé Aré, fils de Khacho et Moukhtar du village qui leur donnait l'hospitalité, leur apprit que Damadian était venu dans les environs, qu'il enrôlait des soldats et qu'après en avoir réuni un millier, son intention était d'en jeter la moitié sur un village Musulman près de Mouch et de s'emparer à l'aide de l'autre moitié du dépôt d'armes.

Le témoin en cours de route remarqua de tous côtés des gens qui se promenaient armés et qui n'étaient autres que les villageois. Il explique le retard apporté par les Moukhtars de Chenik, Semal, Guéliéguzan à venir auprès de Taleb par leurs mauvaises intentions, et il conclut de l'absence des nommés Kouriki, frère de Tavo, de Semal, Boghos, Murdo, Erko, et Michaïl qu'ils devaient être dans les montagnes avec Damadian.

Le témoin entendit de la bouche du prêtre Ohannès, de Semal, que les Arméniens voulaient se délivrer des Kurdes pour vivre plus tranquilles, et les villageois lui dirent avoir été prévenus de la venue de Taleb et de l'objet de sa mission par l'Évêque Nersès, actuellement en prison à Bitlis. Ce dernier n'a pas cessé d'écrire aux Arméniens pour les encourager "à ne pas perdre espoir, à continuer leurs affaires, en leur promettant la création d'un État indépendant, où tous vivront tranquilles." Cela ressort, explique le témoin, de correspondances interceptées par l'autorité.

En ce qui concerne les événements de 1894, il déclare qu'un nommé Kirkgos, aujourd'hui décédé et qui le lui raconta, rencontra dans la forêt où il coupait du bois, une bande d'une vingtaine d'hommes armés, parmi lesquels deux villageois de Kavar, qui lui demandaient des renseignements sur Mourad, et qui, en se déclarant étrangers, ajoutèrent, "Tu entendras bientôt parler de nous."

Quinze jours après environ, en apprenant les attaques des Arméniens sur les Kurdes Velikanli et le meurtre d'un Kurde aux environs de Guéliéguzan, le témoin pensa que c'était ce qu'ils avaient voulu dire en promettant de faire parler d'eux.

En terminant son récit, le témoin affirme qu'aujourd'hui tout le monde, sans pouvoir préciser personne, empêche les villageois de Kavar de dire la vérité relativement aux agitateurs Mourad et Damadian, à tel point qu'un su et vu de tous, deux riches villageois ont été emmenés par le fils de Mardiros Agha, membre du Conseil Administratif, la nuit dans sa maison et engagés à ne pas dire la vérité: "Ils n'avaient rien à craindre."

Interrogé sur les indices qu'il peut avoir de cette conversation, à laquelle ni lui ni personne de sa connaissance n'a assisté, le témoin répond qu'elle se comprend par tout ce qui se passe.

Il ignore le sort du prêtre Ohannès et ne sait s'il est vivant ou mort. Il attribue l'envoi des troupes dans la montagne à la nécessité de faire cesser les combats entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens. Il n'a pas entendu les seconds se plaindre des premiers; au contraire, des rixes fréquentes se produisaient entre les Kurdes eux-mêmes pour la protection des Chrétiens.

L'interrogatoire du nommé Rechid, Kurde de Guéliéguzan, commencé dans cette séance, n'étant pas terminé, sa déposition intégrale sera incluse dans le procès-verbal de la séance où elle prendre fin.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. VILBERT.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 10 in No. 99.

Medical Report.

(Traduction.)

LE nommé Ovak, fils de Merkè, âgé d'environ 15 à 16 ans, villageois de Semal, ayant prétendu, au cours de son interrogatoire devant la Commission, avoir à la tête et sur le corps un certain nombre de blessures faites à la baïonnette, la Commission d'Enquête nous a chargés d'examiner le dit Ovak. En procédant à son examen de la tête jusqu'aux pieds, nous avons trouvé sur les quatre côtés de la tête, et au nombre de vingt-trois, des cicatrices superficielles, résultant d'une série de pointes de feu, et de formes différentes, triangulaires, cruciales, ponctuées. Parmi elles, à la partie supérieure du crâne du côté de l'os frontal, un affaissement de date ancienne, d'un centimètre de longueur environ, et sur lequel nous avons remarqué une brûlure également pratiquée à la pointe de feu; de plus nous avons observé à la partie postérieure du thorax, soit à droite, soit à gauche, et de forme ovale, seize cicatrices dont la plus grande d'à peu près 2½ à 3 centimètres de longueur, plus quatre cicatrices sur le bras gauche, puis sur la fesse gauche deux punctiformes, et toutes ces cicatrices provenant de pointes de feu.

Il ressort, soit de la forme, soit de l'apparence extérieure des cicatrices dont nous avons constaté l'existence, soit à la tête, soit au thorax, que ce ne sont pas des cicatrices de blessures pénétrantes, résultant de coups de baïonnette. Car, s'il avait eu une blessure pénétrante causée par un coup de baïonnette, la forme des cicatrices précitées aurait du être à peu près circulaire et resserrée, tandis qu'il a été constaté scientifiquement qu'elles sont au contraire superficielles, et ressemblent en même temps par leur apparence à des cicatrices de brûlures. Ainsi, comme une telle cicatrice d'une longueur diamétrique de 2½ à 3 centimètres, et qui daterait de six ou sept mois, aurait dû être au moins un peu plus grande au moment où elle s'est produite. Comme il n'y a pas de baïonnette d'un tel diamètre longitudinal, et même, en admettant qu'il y en eût, il est évident qu'un tel diamètre ne se trouverait pas à la pointe, mais à la base de la baïonnette; et dans ce cas, en supposant qu'elle fût entrée, non pas jusqu'à la base; mais jusqu'à la moitié, comme parmi les cicatrices se trouvant sur les côtés de la poitrine, nous en avons vu une série de dangereuses dans les régions pulmonaire et plévrale, et quatre ou cinq en particulier, opposées à la région du cœur, il s'ensuit qu'un organe aussi important aurait dû être blessé, et au même moment, la vie de l'individu en question eût été éteinte. De plus, de la rougeur existant à la surface des cicatrices et des escarres qui sont sur quelques-unes d'entre elles, nous avons compris médicalement qu'elles ne remontaient pas à six ou sept mois, mais un mois et demi au maximum, et que ces mêmes cicatrices résultaient d'une pointe de feu, et non d'une blessure pénétrante faite à la baïonnette.

En foi de quoi nous avons dressé et présenté le rapport.

Le Capitaine Médecin attaché à la Commission d'Enquête,
(L.S.) BESSIM.

Le Capitaine Médecin du Régiment de Cavalerie,
(L.S.) VASSIF.

Le Médecin de la Municipalité de Mouch,
(L.S.) DIMITRI MARGARIDI SARIDI.

Pour traduction certifiée conforme:
(Signé) M. VILBERT.

7 *Choubât*, 1310 (19 *Février*, 1895).

Inclosure 11 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 23 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 20, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin entendu au cours de cette séance est le nommé Rechid, Kurde de Guéliéguzan, fils de Djerdo âgé de 30 à 35 ans, marié, fermier, qui complète sa déposition, commencée dans la séance précédente. Il résulte de ses déclarations que Mourad venait à Guéliéguzan, avec une bande de compagnons pris entre les gens de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan, parmi lesquels se trouvaient deux habitants de chacune de ces villages, plus des Arméniens de Sasseun et de Metink d'entre lesquels les nommés Kevork et Attam. Il ne sait sait pas le nom des autres. Lui-même a vu Mourad de loin et peut dire seulement qu'il est de petite taille. La peur l'a empêché de s'approcher. Au printemps de 1894, Mourad, dit le témoin, passant pour aller à Talori, conseilla aux villageois de Guéliéguzan de se réunir à l'Antok-Dagh, en y emmenant leurs familles. Ces derniers ne suivirent pas ce conseil.

Après son départ, les Arméniens tuèrent un Kurde, en lui volant 100 ou 150 moutons, coupèrent la tête à un second Karekauli, et l'apportèrent à Mourad qui récompensa ce meurtre par cinq medjidiés, se portèrent, un jour après à une attaque à Kourtik-Dagh sur les Kurdes auxquels ils tuèrent plusieurs hommes, et trois jours après tuèrent trois Kurdes "Lutchikussli" de la tribu des Badikauli.

Les Kurdes, ainsi maltraités et persécutés par les Arméniens, au point qu'ils ne pouvaient plus aller à leurs champs ni au moulin, se rassemblèrent, et la lutte commença entre les deux parties. Le témoin ignore le nom et la quantité de ces Kurdes. La conséquence fut la fuite des villageois de Guéliéguzan à l'Antok-Dagh, où le témoin fut emmené par eux, et quoique Mourad eût donné auparavant l'ordre de le tuer.

Pendant les sept ou huit jours qu'ils y séjournèrent ils se battèrent environ un à deux heures par jour. Les Arméniens qui y étaient réunis habitants de plusieurs villages, au nombre de 1,500 environ, avaient les mêmes armes que les Kurdes, sauf les compagnons de Mourad, qui comptaient sept ou huit fusils (armes de guerre).

Le témoin qui n'était pas libre de ses mouvements, ne pouvait se rendre un compte exact de ce qui se passait et ne saurait dire le nombre des Arméniens ayant péri pendant ces combats.

Dans le cours de sa déposition, le témoin attribue ensuite la fuite des Arméniens à l'Antok-Dagh, non plus aux rixes s'étant produites entre eux et les Kurdes, mais aux avis de Mourad, qui venu une seconde fois, avait conseillé aux premiers à la suite de leurs attaques d'agression et de meurtre sur les Kurdes et ses soldats à lui, Mourad n'étant pas encore arrivés, de tuer tout Musulman qu'ils rencontreraient sur leur route et de gagner l'Antok-Dagh pour se livrer au brigandage, d'abord au nombre de deux ou trois dans le but de faire des reconnaissances ensuite en bande, dont les hommes étaient choisis et envoyés par Mourad. Ils pillaient dans de différentes directions des maisons Kurdes isolées. Le témoin ne prenait pas part à ces expéditions et restait sur la montagne, sur les flancs de laquelle les Arméniens se promenaient armés nuit et jour. Ils y demeurèrent dix ou douze jours environ, au bout desquels ils se sauvèrent de divers côtés; ceux de Chenik vers Koulp, de Semal vers Khian, de Guéliéguzan vers Sassoun. Deux jours avant de se séparer, les habitants des trois villages avaient tenu conseil avec Mourad pour savoir s'ils devaient attaquer d'abord les soldats de Merguemouzan ou les Kurdes Bekrauli, et Mourad leur avait indiqué ce dernier parti. Mais, sur ces entrefaites, des Kurdes Bekrauli se rendant, au nombre de dix ou douze, tous à Merguemouzan pour s'y plaindre des crimes et des vols des Arméniens, ceux-ci avant que les Kurdes n'y fussent arrivés les attaquèrent près de Semal. Il y eut des morts des deux côtés. Les deux parties restèrent en face l'un de l'autre. Pendant la nuit les Kurdes brûlèrent une ou deux maisons de Semal. Ce que voyant, les Arméniens brûlèrent le reste; puis ils se retirèrent sur la montagne de Kousé où eut lieu un nouveau combat. Les Kurdes furent refoulés au delà de Chenik, dont les Arméniens, craignant un retour offensif d'un plus grand nombre de Kurdes, brûlèrent également les maisons. Le lendemain matin, après avoir tenu conseil, ils simulèrent un départ vers Guéliéguzan pour attirer les Kurdes, sur lesquels ils revinrent brusquement et dont ils tuèrent un grand nombre. Les Arméniens perdirent six hommes et une femme. Ils regagnèrent ensuite l'Antok-Dagh, où ils tinrent un nouveau conseil en disant à Mourad qu'ils attaqueraient les soldats et iraient ensuite à Mouch. Mourad s'y refusa en alléguant le petit nombre de leurs soldats et en les engageant puisqu'ils n'avaient pas de Kurdes

devant eux, à se rendre dans le passage de Guéliéguzan, pour y attendre qu'il leur envoyât de Talori des soldats ou une réponse.

Le lendemain vers midi, un combat se produisit aux environs de Guéliéguzan entre les Arméniens venus de la montagne et les Kurdes ou les soldats ! Le témoin ne peut le dire au juste, n'étant pas descendu ce jour-là. Les Arméniens revinrent le soir après avoir brûlé leurs maisons, à ce qu'ils disaient eux-mêmes. Ils racontaient aussi qu'ils avaient eu un prêtre tué de Semal nommé Ohannès et deux villageois de Guéliéguzan. Les Musulmans avaient eu également de grandes pertes que le témoin ne peut préciser.

Le lendemain n'ayant pas reçu de réponse de Mourad, les Arméniens lui envoyèrent trois hommes : Kevork, Aktan, et un troisième de Chenek ou de Semal, le témoin en ignore le nom, qui rapportèrent un jour après la réponse suivante : "Comme on m'a trompé, je vous ai trompé ; faites ce que vous voudrez." Les Arméniens se dirent : "Puisque nous avons brûlé nos villages, que nous sommes trop peu pour attaquer les soldats, que nous ne pouvons nous rendre, que nous avons commis un grand nombre de méfaits que l'autorité ne nous pardonnera pas, nous devons penser à nous sauver," et ils se dispersèrent dans des directions différentes, se cachant dans les fourrés, les gens de Guéliéguzan se dirigeant vers leurs Aghas Kurdes de Sassoun.

Le témoin lui-même avec sa famille et le nommé Ali, son cousin, passa la nuit dans la forêt.

Le lendemain ils allèrent se rendre aux troupes à Merguemouzan dont le campement comptait à peu près vingt tentes.

Là, le témoin s'étant adressé à un officier supérieur, dont il ne sait pas le nom, fut renvoyé par lui au Lieutenant Ali Effendi qui reçut sa déposition et expédia sa famille à Khian. Le témoin l'y rejoignit deux ou trois jours après, sans plus retourner à Guéliéguzan. Il entendit parler de la venue de Mushir qui allait, disait-on, réinstaller chacun dans sa propre maison et avait également défendu aux Aghas Kurdes de ne plus toucher aux Arméniens. Quant à ses propres liens, le témoin ignore ce qu'ils sont devenus.

Il résulte de ses autres déclarations :—

1. Que pendant le séjour des Arméniens avec leurs familles sur l'Antok-Dagh et leur fuite de cette montagne, il n'y avait eu d'attaque ni de la part des soldats, ni de la part des Kurdes.

2. Qu'en allant lui-même à Merguemouzan il ne rencontra personne et qu'il aurait été tué par les Kurdes, si ces derniers l'avaient rencontré.

3. Que dans le voisinage de Semal il n'y avait que peu de Kurdes Badekanli, Latchikanli, et Bekimanli, qui furent attaqués et pillés par les Arméniens.

4. Que les soldats de Merguemouzan qui ne voyaient pas ces combats entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens n'y prenaient aucune part et répondaient aux Kurdes, venant porter plainte, qu'ils ne pouvaient intervenir sans ordre du Gouvernement.

Pendant les dix ou douze jours que le témoin passa sur l'Antok-Dagh il y avait combat quotidien pendant une heure ou deux, sauf trois jours exceptés.

Invité à expliquer comment il pouvait, puisqu'il était prisonnier, connaître les détails des combats survenus entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens et les conseils tenus par ces derniers, il répond qu'il avait de temps à autre la faculté de se rendre auprès des Arméniens de qui il tient ces renseignements.

C'est d'eux qu'il apprit également un soir à leur retour l'attaque à laquelle ils se portèrent sur des soldats, passant par Guéliéguzan pour aller à Talori et au cours de laquelle il y eut des pertes considérables des deux côtés. Parmi les Arméniens, les uns disaient que leurs adversaires étaient des soldats et les autres qu'ils étaient Kurdes.

Le témoin ne peut dire de qui il tient le récit de l'assassinat du Kurde Karikanli ci-dessus raconté ; il déclare ne pas être lui-même le Kurde Karikanli Rechid dont il a été plusieurs fois question dans des dépositions précédentes. Il ajoute que, quand son père vint pour la première fois à Guéliéguzan il ne s'y trouvait encore aucun Arménien. Guéliéguzan n'est séparé de l'Antok-Dagh que par deux heures de distance, mais le témoin avant 1894 n'était jamais allé jusqu'à cette montagne.

Les Délégués Consulaires attirent de nouveau l'attention du Président sur l'intérêt qu'il y aurait à nommer en qualité de Drogman un des membres des Conseils Spirituel ou Administratif de l'Evêché Arménien Grégorien et en la personne duquel les témoins Arméniens pourraient avoir confiance.

Le Président ayant répondu que les membres de ces deux Conseils étaient tous suspects ou compromis, les Délégués, sur sa prière de fournir à la Commission des noms pris en dehors de ces personnes, lui soumettent les noms de Boghos Merdjimeni ou son fils Vahan.

Le Président déclare qu'il fera prendre les informations nécessaires.

Sur une question des Délégués, il leur fait connaître que la Commission a pris la veille les mesures destinées à assurer la comparution des femmes de Sinal indiquées par le nommé Tavo dans la séance du 15 Février, 1895 (Procès-verbal No. 19.)

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT,
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 12 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 24 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 21, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin entendu pendant cette séance est le nommé Serko, fils d'Osse, de Guéliéguzan. Son interrogatoire n'ayant pu être terminé, sa déposition intégrale sera donnée en son entier dans le procès-verbal de la séance où elle sera achevée. Au cours de celle du jour le témoin, interrogé par les Délégués Consulaires s'il connaît le Kurde Rechid, de Guéliéguzan, entendu dans la séance du 20 Février (Procès-verbal No. 23), répond affirmativement que lui Rechid avait cinq frères restés à Ghéliéguzan jusqu'à l'arrivée des soldats en 1894, mais que lui-même demeure à Mouch depuis une dizaine d'années.

Vu l'importance du témoignage du dit Rechid, qui s'est présenté devant la Commission comme s'étant trouvé avec les Arméniens sur l'Antok-Dagh, les Délégués demandent la confrontation immédiate de Serko avec lui, d'autant plus qu'il se trouve en ce moment dans le local de la Commission.

Rechid introduit et mis en présence de Serko, celui-ci le reconnaît pour l'individu dont il est question.

Invité à s'expliquer sur la déclaration que répète Serko à son sujet, Rechid répond qu'il ne peut pas mentir en présence de la Commission ; qu'il y a dans les couloirs des gens de Guéliéguzan qui connaissent et qui peuvent dire s'il demeure au village ou à Mouch.

Sur une question du Président, Serko explique que bien que Serko possède une maison et des champs à Guéliéguzan, et que son nom soit inscrit dans les registres, ce sont ses frères qui acquittent les impôts.

Est introduit le nommé Kiragos, qui déclare connaître Rechid ; mais il est depuis dix ou onze ans à Mouch, et vient de temps en temps au village où il a des frères.

Sont ensuite appelés : les nommés Artin, de Chenik, Simo et Egho, de Semal. Le premier déclare ne pas connaître Rechid qu'il a vu pour la première fois et dont il apprit le nom dans le local même de la Commission.

Simon et Egho déclarent que Rechid leur est connu ; il fait le commerce de peaux de renard, et passait de temps à autre par leur village en venant de Mouch où il a sa famille.

A ces affirmations, Rechid répond que sa maison est à Guéliéguzan, où il habite, qu'il vient souvent à Mouch, qu'il se peut qu'il se soit rendu à Semal, mais qu'il ne fait pas le commerce qu'on lui prête.

En ce qui concerne les déclarations de Serko, relatives au nombre de ses frères, Rechid affirme qu'il n'en avait qu'un seul nommé Suleyman, mort l'automne dernier, sur l'Antok-Dagh, où ils s'étaient enfuis ensemble. Il n'a ni frère ni parent nommé Mirzo.

Depuis trois ou quatre ans Guéliéguzan ne renferme d'autres maisons Musulmanes que la sienne, et celle de son cousin Ali.

Interrogé pourquoi il n'a pas fait mention de ce frère Suleyman dans sa déposition de la veille, Rechid répond que c'est parce que ce frère n'était qu'un enfant âgé de 7 ans, et mort des suites de maladie pendant que tous deux se trouvaient à l'Antok-Dagh.

Questionné au sujet de son propre père, ses déclarations sont aussi contradictoires qu'embarrassées. Rechid déclare d'abord qu'il est mort il y a quinze ans, explique ensuite qu'il a voulu dire huit ans, que l'âge de 7 ans, donné à son frère Suleyman, n'était qu'approximatif, ce dernier pouvant avoir été âgé de 8 ans lors de la mort de leur père à tous deux.

Serko, à son tour, déclare que Rechid n'était pas sur l'Antok-Dagh au temps des événements de l'année précédente.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT,
H. S. SHIPLEY,
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 13 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 25 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 22, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le Président ayant déclaré aux Délégués que les deux personnes proposées par eux comme Drogmans dans la séance du 20 Février, 1895 (Procès-verbal No. 23), étaient suspectes, ainsi que trois ou quatre autres Arméniens de Mouch, mais que toute autre personne serait acceptée par la Commission, les Délégués répondent qu'ils n'ont pas d'autres noms à lui soumettre et laissent le choix au Président qui fait appeler, comme second Drogman, le nommé Avedis Agha, membre Arménien élu de la Municipalité de Mouch.

Le témoin entendu au cours de cette séance est le nommé Serko, fils d'Ossé, de Guéliéguzan, membre du Conseil des Anciens, âgé de 48 à 50 ans, marié.

Il complète et termine sa déposition commencée dans la séance de la veille, mais en se plaignant que les Drogmans de la Commission parlent un Arménien trop savant et non pas sa langue, qui est celle des paysans.

Il raconte qu'aux commencement de Juillet (v. s.) 1894, les bergers de son village, avec leurs familles et les troupeaux se trouvaient aux pâturages habituels, une moitié sur l'Antok-Dagh, l'autre moitié sur la montagne de Haviéront, près de Guéliéguzan, où étaient restés les autres villageois dans leurs maisons, avec leurs familles.

Vers la même époque, le témoin apprit un jour que les villages de Chenik et Semal ayant été entourés par les soldats, les habitants s'étaient enfuis, de peur, tout droit à l'Antok-Dagh, sans passer par Guéliéguzan. Ce même jour, à midi, étant occupé près de sa maison, il entendit le son du clairon et aperçevant à une certaine distance les soldats qui commençaient à couper des arbres et à brûler les maisons dans un quartier du village, éloigné du sien, il prit la fuite vers la montagne et Haviéront, en énumérant avec lui son fils qui était à l'école et son vieil oncle, qui le suppliait de ne pas l'abandonner.

Il fut cependant obligé de laisser en route d'abord son oncle qu'il ne pouvait continuer à porter, puis son propre enfant qui ne pouvait plus le suivre.

Lors de son retour au village en automne, le témoin ne retrouva pas son enfant, mais ayant découvert dans un champ les os et la tête d'un cadavre mangé par les bêtes fauves, il le reconnut pour celui de son oncle aux cheveux de la tête et aux poils du visage.

Le témoin resta une nuit sur l'Haviéront-Dagh, d'où avec sa famille et ses troupeaux, il se sauva vers Khirzan (Sassoun) dans un ravin près de Hetink, à trois ou quatre heures de Guéliéguzan.

Le lendemain, un Agha de Sassoun nommé Youssouf, leur protecteur, vint lui offrir de donner un abri à sa famille. Mais deux autres Kurdes survenant refusèrent de recevoir de pareilles gens dans leur village, en disant à Youssouf Agha, qu'une semblable action les ferait devenir eux-mêmes "hromili" (rebelles) comme les Arméniens.

Youssouf Agha en promettant néanmoins au témoin de venir le chercher plus tard lui fit envoyer ses troupeaux au village sous la conduite de son frère Marké et son neveu Agop.

Les Kurdes leur volèrent les moutons, mais par la grâce de Dieu, ajoute le témoin, Marké et Agop revinrent avec la vie sauve. Quelque temps après, le témoin étant caché avec sa famille dans une fourré non loin de la route, vit passer les soldats qui se dirigeaient directement sur Hetink, et qui s'emparèrent des bestiaux qui lui étaient restés.

Le témoin changea alors de retraite, pendant que les soldats gagnaient le village qu'ils brûlèrent, à ce que le témoin entendit raconter. Interrogé sur ce point, il affirme ensuite avoir vu lui-même de l'endroit élevé où il se trouvait, brûler Hetink. Après être restés pendant quinze jours dans les fourrés où ils se nourrissaient de "guelguel" (espèce de millet dont les paysans font du pain), le témoin et sa famille se rendirent dans une autre forêt située à une assez grande distance de Guéliéguzan. Ils y furent rejoints par un certain nombre de gens de leur village, qui ayant été dispersés dans des directions différentes, avaient réussi à s'échapper. Puis l'ordre étant arrivé ils regagnèrent Guéliéguzan.

Le jour de sa fuite, le témoin entendit du matin au soir des coups de fusil venant du dit village, qui était rempli de soldats; il en fut de même pendant les quinze jours qu'il passa à la montagne, mais le bruit venait de directions différentes.

Tous les soldats qui étaient venus à Guéliéguzan se sont rendus ensuite sur l'Antok-Dagh en tuant tous ceux qu'ils rencontraient sur leur chemin.

Le témoin ne pouvait voir ce que faisaient les soldats sur l'Antok-Dagh même; mais se trouvant dans les fourrés, à un endroit très élevé nommé Tchouroulk, il a vu des soldats qui étaient dans le ravin de Guéliésan à 3 ou 3½ heures de Guéliéguzan, où étaient beaucoup de fuyards de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan mêlés ensemble.

De ce dernier village dans ce ravin le témoin déclare avoir vu tuer par les soldats, de ses propres jeux, les gens suivants: Recho, fils d'Erko, âgé de 20 à 30 ans; le fils de Farho, âgé de 20 ans; le fils d'Avo, berger, âgé de 20 ans; Stepan, fils de Guiro, âgé de 20 ans; et son frère, âgé de 7 ans; Egho, âgé de 40 à 45 ans; Mardo, fils d'Erko, âgé de 30 ans, cousin du témoin; le frère d'Asatour, nommé Hario, âgé de 7 ans; Hario, fils de Vartab, âgé de 25 ans; Ono, fils de Miko, berger, âgé de 35 ans.

Leurs corps, ajoute le témoin, sont restés dans le ravin. Le témoin, de plus, a entendu dire que ces gens avaient été tués par les soldats, à Khatcho Oghlou et Asatour, blessés au même moment dans ce ravin.

Interrogé comment ces gens avaient été tués, à coups de fusil ou de baïonnette, le témoin répond qu'il n'a pu distinguer puis explique, ensuite, que ceux qui étaient tués de loin l'étaient à coups de fusil; il ne peut rien dire pour ceux qui étaient frappés de près, et il nie avoir dit dans l'interrogatoire qu'il n'avait pas vu de ses propres yeux les gens ci-dessus mentionnés, être tués par les soldats.

Il explique également que près de Guéliésan sont beaucoup de ravins, que lui-même ne pouvait voir, mais d'où montait le bruit d'une forte fusillade. Ces ravins, dans lesquels il n'y avait que des gens de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan sont à deux heures ou trois heures de distance des villages de Hetink et de Aggi, situés en face l'un de l'autre.

Le témoin affirme très positivement que parmi les Arméniens ni ceux qui ont été tués ni ceux qui se sont sauvés n'ont jamais tiré sur les soldats; et à une question du Président qui lui demande pourquoi dans ce cas les soldats les auraient attaqués, il répond que lui ne peut le savoir. Il se peut que parmi les Arméniens il y en ait eu d'armés, mais le témoin l'ignore. Il ajoute, en s'adressant au Président, "des femmes ont été tuées à coups de baïonnette. Est-ce qu'elles aussi avaient des armes?"

Le témoin raconte ensuite qu'il a entendu dire à des gens de Guéliéguzan, dont il ne se rappelle pas le nom, que beaucoup de femmes de leur village avaient été tuées. Lui-même y a vu les cadavres de deux femmes dont l'une nommée Hafse était mariée au nommé Serko, fils d'Avo; il ignore comment s'appelait l'autre.

Le témoin, pressé par le Président de désigner les individus qui lui avaient raconté que des femmes ont été tuées, affirme ne pas se souvenir. S'il avait su être soumis à un pareil interrogatoire, il aurait tâché de se rappeler; mais que la Commission vienne, il lui montrera les ruines et les fosses.

Invité à s'expliquer, le témoin dit vouloir parler des fosses où ont été enterrés le prêtre Ohannès et beaucoup d'autres personnes tués au camp de Guéliéguzan, où elles étaient allées se rendre. Ces fosses se trouvent dans les champs à cinq minutes environ du village et tous les habitants en connaissent l'existence. Lui-même ne les a pas inspectées mais Tono, fils de Simo, entre autres les lui a montrées.

Le témoin quand il se trouvait dans la montagne près de Hetink aperçut de loin le prêtre Ohannès qui s'était sauvé avec beaucoup d'autres personnes vers le ravin, se diriger de là au camp. Il n'a pas vu ce qui se passait ni comment le prêtre Ohannès et ses compagnons ont été tués. Le lendemain, les soldats vinrent dans la direction du témoin, mais une sorte de brouillard qui s'éleva l'empêcha de rien distinguer.

De ses autres déclarations il résulte:—

1. Qu'il a ni vu ni entendu parler de combats entre Arméniens et Kurdes. Il ignore ce qu'ont pu faire les gens de Chenik et Semal, étant un homme occupé de ses propres affaires.

2. S'étant enfui seul du village, il ignore ce qui s'y passa et dans quelle direction se sauvèrent les autres villageois.

3. Au sujet des armes que portaient les bergers de son village, de leur nombre et de leur habitude de paître, les troupeaux sur les flancs de la montagne, le témoin fournit les mêmes explications que le nommé Sako, entendu dans la séance du 13 Février, 1895 (Procès-verbal No. 17).

4. Il a entendu dire au nommé Tavo et à d'autres gens de Semal et Chénik, que les soldats s'étaient rendus de Guéliéguzan à l'Antok-Dagh où "ils ont fait ce qu'ils ont fait."

De là ils retournèrent à Guéliéguzan d'où ils partirent ensuite vers Talori.

5. Le jour où il a vu les soldats se rendre à Hetink était le lendemain des événements de Guéliésan. Il y avait à la fin des cavaliers et des piétons. Les premiers allaient à Talori, les seconds passaient par les ravins.

6. Il nie connaître un individu nommé Mourad Hamparsoum et affirme que personne n'est venu de Talori dans son village entre Mars 1894 et le moment de la fuite des villageois à la montagne.

7. Il n'a pas vu venir davantage aucun afferme ur des dîmes pendant 1894, jusqu'au moment de son départ pour Antok-Dagh. Il dit avoir seulement traité des affaires en Mai avec un nommé Mirzo, fils de Dervich, des Kurdes Khochekanli, il ne sait rien des relations de commerce existant entre Guéliéguzan et Mouch.

Les villageois avaient payé leur impôt sur les moutons à l'Agent du Gouvernement.

Saadi Onbachi, venu au village à deux reprises en 1894, le réclamer la première fois au commencement de l'été, la seconde en Juillet. Ils avaient fourni aussi aux soldats campés à Merguemouzan par l'entremise d'un zaptieh, des moutons et une certaine quantité de beurre.

8. Les habitants de Guéliéguzan versent aux Aghas Kurdes de Sassoun le "hafir" consistant en produits agricoles, habits, &c., et atteignant une valeur annuelle de 4,000 à 5,000 piastres pour tout le village; faute de quoi leurs moutons seraient volés par les Kurdes; ils en ont fait plusieurs fois l'expérience.

Les Pétitions à cet égard adressées aux autorités sont restées sans résultat.

9. Invité à préciser la date des événements le témoin déclare que le Mariam-Periz (Jeûne de la Fête de la Vierge) a eu lieu pendant que les Arméniens étaient en fuite.

10. Il ignore si les villages de Kiagaschin et de Chouchamerg, distants de Guéliéguzan de cinq ou six heures, ont été brûlés ou non.

11. Interrogé sur les actes de brigandage et d'atrocité dont les Arméniens se seraient rendus coupables sur les Kurdes, le témoin nie en avoir aucune connaissance et prie la Commission de venir faire la comparaison entre les villages Kurdes et Arméniens: elle verra par elle-même.

Le second témoin entendu se nomme Kiragos, fils de Kiragos, de Guéliéguzan, âgé de 19 à 20 ans, célibataire.

Il déclare qu'ayant appris l'arrivée de la Commission il est venu exposer sa plainte et se dit prêt à répondre aux questions qui lui seront posées.

Invité à s'expliquer, il répond, "Les soldats sont venus et nous ont tués."

Poursuivant ses déclarations il raconte que la veille de l'attaque des troupes sur Guéliéguzan, il était en train d'arroser ses champs à une demi-heure du village, quand les gens de Chenik et de Semal allant droit à l'Antok-Dagh passèrent à une certaine distance de lui; il ignorait le motif de leur fuite. Le lendemain de grand matin il était encore à arroser ses champs quand il entendit le son du clairon et vit les soldats se dirigeant droit sur Guéliéguzan. Il se sauva vers la montagne.

Entrant dans plus de détails le témoin dit s'être demandé les motifs de la fuite des villageois de Chenik et de Semal; et ce n'est que le soir du même jour qu'il apprit qu'elle avait été causée par l'arrivée des soldats. Le lendemain, en les voyant lui-même, il pensa que peut-être ils venaient pour protéger son village. C'est seulement après les avoir vus mettre le feu à quelques maisons situées dans un des deux quartiers de Guéliéguzan, séparées l'un de l'autre par un cours d'eau, et en entendant de nombreux coups de fusil, qu'il prit la fuite vers la montagne.

Ce jour là tous les habitants étaient au village: les femmes dans les champs à cueillir de l'herbe, les bergers sur les hauteurs, situées entre une demi-heure et deux heures de distance de Guéliéguzan et nommées: Hadjik, Medjelli, Keupru Sheristan, Tchai.

Le témoin apprit plus tard de sa propre famille que les villageois en fuyant de Guéliéguzan, n'étaient pas entrés en lutte avec les troupes qui les poursuivaient et que dans le village n'étaient restés que de vieilles gens, des aveugles, et des boiteux, qui furent tués par les soldats.

Le témoin se réfugia dans le ravin de Aviechan, où il resta sept à huit jours. Une lutte se produisait au cours de laquelle il y eut des tués du côté des soldats et du côté des Arméniens. Il se sauva alors dans le ravin de Guéliésan. Y ayant souffert de la faim, il ne peut dire combien de temps il y est resté. Les soldats étant venus sur eux, il s'enfuit à Tsovasar, où il resta trois ou quatre jours; de nouveau affamé, il revint au ravin de Aviechan, où il resta se nourissant de "guelguel" récoltés la nuit.

Ayant entendu dire que les troupes avaient quitté Guéliéguzan pour Semal, il regagna son village où il vécut également de graines.

Il y entendit raconter par la famille de ses oncles, que ceux-ci, au nombre de deux, nommés Khazar et Serkis, avaient été tués par les soldats dans le ravin de Guéliésan; lui-même se trouvait alors dans un autre ravin.

Postérieurement, entrant dans plus de détails, le témoin dit que lors de sa fuite et lors de son séjour à la montagne; il avait rencontré à la partie inférieure du ravin de Guéliésan la famille de ses oncles, dont lui-même trouva les cadavres et qu'il enterra

Cette famille avait été emmenée prisonnière par les soldats au village de Hetink et relâchée cinq ou six jours après.

Le témoin, rentré au village après que le Muchir qui y était resté quinze jours et y avait rétabli la tranquillité en fut parti, y vit les cadavres de deux vieilles femmes tuées à coups de baïonnette et qu'il ensevelit à côté de petits os, dont il ignore la provenance et qu'il trouva en creusant une fosse sous un mur en ruines.

L'une de ces femmes, veuve, se nommait Schamé, et avait deux fils, Khagar et Gopé. Le témoin a entendu dire qu'ils avaient abandonné leur mère au moment de l'attaque et avaient ensuite été tués.

La seconde, plus âgée et veuve également, se nommait Hazé. Elle fut abandonnée par son fils Medjdo qui se trouverait actuellement dans un des villages de la plaine.

Comme il n'apparaissait pas clairement aux Délégués Consulaires des déclarations précédentes du témoin si celui-ci se trouvant dans le ravin d'Aviechan avait vu des soldats tués par des Arméniens, ils prient le Président de lui poser la question directe. Le Président n'y consent qu'à la condition de faire inscrire au procès-verbal la demande expresse des Délégués. Le témoin répond dans ces termes: "Moi, je ne l'ai pas vu."

Le Président lui ayant fait observer qu'il avait déclaré avoir vu plusieurs personnes tuées dans ce même endroit, il expliqua: "J'ai vu des Arméniens, un père tué avec ses deux fils, et je me suis sauvé."

Interrogé sur l'état où il trouva son village à son retour, le témoin répond que les champs étaient dévastés, plus que la moitié des maisons brûlées, l'église détruite, l'église où ne restaient plus ni vases sacrés ni croix avait été saccagée et transformée en hôpital et que de chaque côté du village il y avait une fosse remplie de cadavres. Le [illegible word] de Guéliéguzan qui s'y était rendu avec plusieurs personnes lui ayant indiqué l'endroit le témoin y alla comme les autres villageois. La fosse avait été ouverte par les bêtes fauves qui en avaient mangé quelques cadavres dont les mains restées intactes et quelques ossements avaient été laissés au bord. Le témoin qui recouvrit ces fosses, y vit enfoncés deux cadavres, revêtus de leurs vêtements mais qu'il ne pût reconnaître. Il ne saurait préciser le nombre des cadavres qu'elles ont renfermés.

Invité à expliquer ce mot de hastahane* dont il s'est servi pour qualifier l'église, il affirma avoir voulu dire abdesthane,† à cause des immondices dont elle était souillée.

L'interrogatoire du nommé Artin, fils de Merké, de Chenik, ayant été commencé dans cette séance, sa déposition sera donnée en son entier dans le procès-verbal de la séance où elle sera achevée.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 14 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 26 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 23, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin entendu dans cette séance complète et achève sa déposition commencée la veille. Il se nomme Artin, fils de Merké, de Chenik, membre du Conseil des Anciens, âgé de 50 ans environ, marié, père de famille.

Il raconte que dans les derniers jours de Juillet 1894 (v. s.), son village ayant été entouré par une grande quantité de Kurdes Bekranli et de soldats, dont il ne saurait évaluer le nombre, les habitants de Chenik prirent la fuite vers l'Antok-Dagh, en s'arrêtant à la montagne de Tchai, située à une heure environ à mi-chemin entre Guéliéguzan et Semal; les habitants de ce dernier village les y rejoignirent et le troisième jour tous se sauvèrent sur l'Antok-Dagh.

Le lendemain, les habitants de Guéliéguzan, attaqués à leur tour et effrayés vinrent se réunir à eux.

Le témoin déclare que pendant la fuite des gens des deux premiers villages il n'y eut plus de lutte entre les Kurdes et les soldats et les Arméniens poursuivis. Mais plus tard, sans rien voir lui-même, il entendit des coups de fusil et des cris d'hommes qui venaient du côté de Guéliéguzan au moment où les Kurdes et les soldats s'y trouvaient.

* Hospital.

† Water-closet.

Les Arméniens prirent avec eux femmes et enfants et troupeaux, et emportèrent leurs effets transportables; le reste fut laissé dans les villages ainsi que des petits enfants ne pouvant être énumérés.

Les trois villages furent occupés par les soldats et brûlés par eux.

Le témoin ignore les causes de l'attaque faite sur les villages, dont les habitants ni cette année 1894, ni l'année précédente n'avaient eu de conflits d'aucune sorte avec les Kurdes. Le jour même, les villageois avaient fourni le ravitaillement au détachement de Merguemouzan. Les Kurdes nomades qui arrivaient justement à leurs pâturages d'été se joignirent aux soldats et l'attaque combinée eut lieu.

Les détails fournis par le témoin relativement au nombre des bergers, et au fait qu'ils étaient toujours armés concordent avec les dépositions précédentes.

Le jour de l'attaque, les bergers de Chenik qui étaient sous leurs huttes à une demi-heure de distance s'enfuirent avec les villageois en emmenant leurs troupeaux.

Sur l'Antok-Dagh cinq ou six de ces bergers furent tués et les autres disparurent.

Là, sur la montagne, les gens de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan réunis restèrent cachés dans les fourrés et sous les broussailles pendant cinq ou six jours, au bout desquels ils furent attaqués de nouveau par les soldats qu'accompagnaient les Kurdes. Poursuivis, ils prirent alors la fuite: les gens de Semal et Guéliéguzan dans la direction de Kharzan (Sassoun), et ceux de Chenik vers Khian. Dans le ravin de Guéliésan le plus rapproché d'eux, plusieurs habitants de Chenik furent tués, dont les noms suivent: Artin, fils de Bedo; Girbo, fils d'Artin; Mamouk, fils de ce même Girbo; Artin, fils de Khasso; Mirzo, fils d'Agop; Girbo, fils de Tono.

Le témoin les vit lui-même tués par les soldats, mais étant loin, ne peut dire avec quelle arme ils ont été frappés.

Les familles, femmes, et enfants de ces villageois se sauvèrent alors avec les gens de Semal et de Guéliéguzan.

Le témoin au moment de la panique abandonna lui-même son petit fils Garabet, âgé de 3 à 4 ans. Il ajoute que s'il était resté auprès de son enfant il aurait été également frappé.

Sa petite fille Chouchan fut laissée aussi par sa propre mère. Il n'a jamais revu ses deux petits enfants.

Pendant cette poursuite des femmes et des enfants furent tués à ce qu'il apprit de Ohan, fils de Boghos, et d'Erko, fils de Kourki, tous deux de Chenik.

Au cours de toute cette attaque le témoin n'a pas vu qu'il y eût de combats, mais a entendu les coups de fusil.

Au moment où les villageois se divisèrent les troupes se dirigèrent sur les gens de Semal et Guéliéguzan. Ceux de Chenik, après être resté, dispersés et cachés un jour dans le ravin de Guéliésan, se rassemblèrent peu à peu, et gagnant Onsli, demeurèrent cachés dans la montagne de dix à dix-huit jours.

Après quoi ils rentrèrent à leur village, dont ils trouvèrent toutes les maisons incendiées, et qui sont encore aujourd'hui dans le même état.

Alors que les troupes n'avaient pas encore quitté Semal, postérieurement aux événements, un officier de zaptiés de Mouch, Hussein Aghá, vint leur dire de la part de l'autorité qu'on leur donnerait du pain et des rations. Sur cette assurance ils commencèrent à reconstruire de toutes petites habitations près du village même. Mais cette promesse n'ayant été suivie d'effet, ils furent hospitalisés dans les villages de la plaine de Mouch. Son fils Bedros, à ce qu'on lui a dit, se trouve avec sa propre famille à Alvarindj.

Il ressort des autres questions posées au témoin que:—

1. Les bestiaux sont restés dans l'Antok-Dagh, sans qu'on ait su ce qu'ils sont devenus.

2. Erko, de Chenik, qui a eu un frère tué, rejoignit seul les gens de ce village quelques jours après leur fuite de Guéliésan. Il portait deux blessures, une au front et une à la joue, et a dit au témoin les avoir reçues des soldats, mais le témoin ne lui a pas demandé en quel endroit de la montagne. Il resta avec eux un jour, et se sépara d'eux, allant dans une direction que le témoin ignore.

3. Le témoin connaît Serkis, cousin d'Erko, mais ne connaît pas le reste de sa famille. Il ne l'a pas vu avec eux sur l'Antok-Dagh.

4. Le témoin ne sait que pendant leur séjour à la montagne les Arméniens soient descendus pour se livrer à une attaque sur les Kurdes ou les troupes.

Les prêtres de Semal et de Guéliéguzan, qui se trouvaient parmi eux, y restèrent jusqu'à la fuite vers Guéliésan, et partirent avec leurs villageois. Le témoin ne les a plus revus.

5. Pendant que les Arméniens étaient sur l'Antok-Dagh on n'a pas tiré le canon sur eux.

6. Les villageois de Chenik n'avaient aucune relation avec Talori.

7. Avant leur fuite à l'Antok-Dagh il n'y avait pas, à la connaissance du témoin, d'Arméniens se promenant armés sur les flancs de la montagne, et les villageois n'ont pas caché leurs effets dans des fosses.

8. Contrairement aux affirmations d'Erko, il n'y a pas eu de luttes entre les Arméniens, les Kurdes, et les troupes.

9. Les tribus nomades qui viennent aux pâturages d'été sauf les Bekrandi, de 100 à 150 tentes, campant loin de Chenik à Isovasar, crête de montagne qui s'étend de Shalik jusqu'aux Kop et Kourtik-Dagh les Badikanli comprenant douze subdivisions (Kabilé), dont l'une les Khochekanli, de cinquante à soixante tentes campent non loin de Chenik, près de Merguemouzan jusqu'à Paaghisar.

Aucun des habitants de Chenik ne paie de "hafir" aux Kurdes.

Le témoin a entendu dire par les Kurdes de Kurzan (Sassoun), qui ne viennent pas aux pâturages, et qui ne sont pas nomades, qu'un de leurs Aghas Khalil en recevait de Semal.

10. Les troupes venaient chaque année à Merguemouzan pour protéger les Arméniens contre les Kurdes nomades. Les pâturages de Chenik se trouvent sur le Kourtik-Dagh vers Mouch. Les villageois y montent fin Juin et fin Juillet redescendant au temps de la récolte.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 15 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 27 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 25, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le premier témoin entendu est le nommé Dervish, Kurde du village de Kochekan, dépendant de Mouch, âgé de 50 ans environ, marié.

Il résulte de sa déposition qu'ayant de longue date des relations d'affaires et d'amitié avec les habitants des villages de Kavar, il s'était rendu en Mai ou Juin 1894 à Semal. Avant d'y arriver, il aperçut trois hommes qui en poursuivaient un autre dans la montagne; c'était Damadian, au secours duquel environ 200 villageois de Chenik et de Semal accoururent.

A l'arrivée du témoin avec ses trois fils, Mirzo, Melichech, et Ibrahim, les Arméniens renoncèrent à leur projet et Damadian put être amené à Mouch, où il fut consigné à l'autorité.

Les poursuivants de Damadian étaient un zaptié dont il ne se rappelle pas le nom et deux Kurdes Khanli, habitant Mouch depuis longtemps, l'un nommé Mano, et son frère nommé Ressoul, qui a remis une requête à la Commission il y a quelques jours.

Ce même Ressoul a été entendu dans la séance du 16 Février (Procès-verbal No. 20).

Deux jours après cet incident le témoin allant au monastère de Kizil-Kilissa fut attaqué sur la route par une quinzaine d'Arméniens qui tirèrent sur lui de nombreux coups de fusil; le dépouillèrent; il ne dut son salut qu'à la rapidité de son cheval. Sur la plainte qu'il porta à l'autorité, le Yuz-Bachi Ishkender Agha, qui fut chargé de l'enquête, finit par arracher au prêtre du dit monastère une liste de noms.

En 1894 au commencement de Juin, les Arméniens de Kavar qui étaient restés depuis la capture de Damadian les ennemis du témoin et qui l'auraient tué partout où ils l'auraient rencontré, ayant eu connaissance que son fils Ibrahim était avec ses moutons au pâturage du Guérikan, sis à 2 ou 3 kilom. de Chenik et de Semal, s'y rendirent au nombre de cinquante ou soixante, enlevèrent le troupeau et blessèrent le dit Ibrahim d'un coup de fusil à Pabdunen; il mourut au bout de trois mois de la suite de cette blessure. Au moment de l'attentat se trouvaient présents les Kurdes Mano et Kheebo et quelques muletiers de passage.

Parmi les agresseurs Ibrahim reconnut les nommés Girbo et son frère Artin, Avo Khanzo, Boghos, de Guéliéguzan.

Le témoin, interrogé s'il n'a porté aucune plainte à l'autorité répond que sa première réclamation relative à l'attaque dont il avait été victime étant resté sans résultat, il a jugé inutile d'en adresser une autre.

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Le témoin n'appartient pas à la tribu de Khochekanli, qui n'a pas d'Aghas, mais seulement des Moukhtars et des Kiahias. Il ne va pas aux pâturages d'été avec cette tribu dans les environs de Merguemouzan.

Les déclarations du témoin concordent avec celles du nommé Réssoul, relatives à l'obstruction, postérieurement à la capture de Damndian, des routes de Khian par les bandes d'Arméniens qui auraient tué les Musulmans s'ils y avaient passé; ils n'auraient pas molesté les autres Arméniens, car ils étaient tous d'accord.

Le second témoin introduit est le nommé Medjdo, fils de Boli, de Guéliéguzan, âgé de 40 ans, marié, berger-laboureur, appelé par la Commission pour contrôler la déposition du nommé Kiragos entendu dans la séance du 22 Février (Procès-verbal No. 25).

Il dit d'abord ne pas s'être sauvé avec les autres villageois à l'Autok-Dagh, mais être resté caché dans les environs de Guéliéguzan. Ses déclarations concordent avec les dépositions précédentes, en ce qui a trait à la fuite des habitants de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan sur la montagne, mais en diffèrent en ce qui, d'après lui, les gens de ces deux villages sont arrivés au 3e, cinq jours avant l'attaque des troupes; après quoi ils ont tous ensemble gagné la montagne.

Le témoin dit que les villageois en fuyant avaient emmené avec eux leurs familles, leurs troupeaux et ceux de leurs effets transportables; lui-même n'ayant pu continuer à porter sa vieille mère, fut obligé de la laisser en arrière et elle fut tué. Il ne l'a pas vue et il n'a pas retrouvé son corps; personne ne lui a dit qu'elle ait été tuée, mais il le suppose car sans cela elle l'aurait cherché et serait venue le retrouver.

Les Arméniens qui étaient depuis cinq jours sur l'Antok-Dagh, attaqués le 6e par les troupes, commencèrent à s'enfuir. Ceux d'entre eux qui n'étaient pas tués par les soldats partirent dans la direction de Kharzan dont les seules routes étaient ouvertes, les autres vers Koulp et Khian étant fermées par les troupes. Pendant dix jours les soldats les poursuivirent parmi les rochers et ceux qui ne purent leur échapper furent tués par eux à coups de fusil et de baïonnette.

Pendant les dix jours le bruit de coups de feu s'entendaient du matin au soir.

Le témoin nie qu'il y ait eu lutte entre les troupes et les Arméniens, qui n'avaient pas d'armes. Sur une question du Président il répond ensuite que les villageois et les bergers en portaient qui leur furent enlevées par les soldats qui les avaient tués. Après être resté avec sa femme et ses enfants vingt-cinq jours dans la montagne, se nourissant d'herbes et de feuilles d'arbre, le témoin regagna Guéliéguzan, dont il trouvait les champs dévastés, les maisons incendiées, ainsi que l'église qui avait été volée et transformée en lieu d'immondices ("Abdest Hane").

Ils restèrent environ un mois au village où ils n'avaient pour toute nourriture que du "guelguel," et descendirent ensuite dans la plaine de Mouch.

Le témoin nie que des habitants de Talori se soient rencontrés avec ceux de Guéliéguzan sur l'Antok-Dagh, mais dit qu'il y avait des relations entre ces villages, qu'il ne sait pas qui venait de Talori, mais désigne comme y allant de temps à autre son propre neveu Kiragos et le nommé Mirzebitch, fils de Serkis, employé à l'église, et d'autres encore, se rendant à Talori pour y voir les gens qu'ils y connaissaient; le témoin ne sait pas le motif de ces visites; il n'a pas vu Mourad, mais a entendu prononcer son nom dans le village; il n'a rien demandé à son sujet et on ne lui a rien dit.

En admettant qu'on ait su quelque chose ce n'est pas à lui qu'on en aurait fait part. Pendant son séjour à Guéliéguzan le témoin a vu son neveu Kiragos, mais ce dernier ne lui a pas parlé de sa mère à lui Medjdo. Les habitants de ce village avaient caché dans des fosses certains de leurs effets qui furent ensuite volés, il ne sait par qui.

Leurs pâturages d'été sont situés non loin du village aux endroits Guéliéguzan, Tchai, Alantzi, Hartchi-Gueli, Besregos, et Mihdar.

Avant l'arrivée des troupes les bergers étaient avec les troupeaux dans les environs du village.

Le témoin n'a pas vu des Arméniens armés se promenant sur les flancs de l'Antok-Dagh, qui, d'après son dire, était considéré comme dépendant de son village.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 10 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 28 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 26, 1895.

TOUS le membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le premier témoin entendu est le Kurde Amo, fils de Mcho, du village de Latchki, dépendant du district de Guendj, âgé de 50 à 60 ans, marié.

Le témoin dépose qu'au printemps de l'année 1894 il s'est rendu au pâturage nommé Mergueboti sur le Kourtik Dagh, distant de deux heures de Chenik et Semal. Au mois de Juillet, sans qu'il précise le jour, les habitants de ces deux villages et ceux de Guéliéguzan, au nombre d'environ 200, attaquèrent vers l'aube les Kurdes campés à ce pâturage et commencèrent à tirer sur eux des coups de fusil.

Les Kurdes se sauvèrent laissant trois hommes tués et les Arméniens se retirèrent emportant le bétail et les effets à eux volés. Quand les Kurdes revinrent, ils trouvèrent les cadavres des trois hommes tués, coupés en morceaux, qu'ils ramassèrent et portèrent au campement des troupes à Merguemouzan.

En réponse à leur plainte l'officier leur dit qu'il ne pouvait rien, n'ayant pas de forces suffisantes, et que les Arméniens étaient des "rebelles." Le témoin ne connaît pas le nom de l'officier, les troupes étant alors nouvellement arrivées.

Les Kurdes ensevelirent ces restes et quittèrent leurs pâturages où ils ne sont plus retournés. Les hommes tués étaient son frère, Moustapha, le fils de ce dernier Mehmet, et un parent, Mahmé Alo. Il y avait au pâturage, au moment de l'attaque des Arméniens, sept tentes et sept personnes, parmi lesquelles était le témoin lui-même.

Il dit avoir reconnu parmi les agresseurs Tavo, de Semal, et Sako, Erko, et Michaïl, de Chenik. Dans la plainte qu'il remit à Passour il y accusa les mêmes individus qu'il avait également désignés à l'officier à Merguemouzan, mais à Passour on lui répondit de même, qu'on ne pouvait rien faire.

Aucune suite n'ayant été donnée à sa plainte, il est venu la réitérer lui-même devant la Commission.

Jusqu'à ces deux dernières années, les relations entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens avaient toujours été bonnes; mais depuis elles ont complètement changées, le témoin ne peut dire pourquoi; il sait seulement que Mourad s'est trouvé parmi eux, les a excités et que depuis lors, les Arméniens formèrent des bandes armées qui se promenaient dans les montagnes et se livraient au brigandage.

Le témoin explique que les Khochekanli qui sont une subdivision ("khilé") de la tribu des Badekanli, ont leurs pâturages d'été dans les voisinages des Kurdes Latchkanli sur l'endroit nommé Kassil, et qu'en hiver ils se rendent avec leurs Chefs Mcho et Kalo vers Diarbekir à l'endroit nommé Khazali.

A la suite de ce témoignage les Délégués demandent la lecture du rapport du Commandant des troupes de Merguemouzan relatif à l'affaire et au meurtre de Mergueboti, et reçoivent la réponse qu'un tel rapport n'existe pas.

Le deuxième témoin entendu est le Kurde Salih-ben-Zoro, du village de Guéliémansour, district de Koulp (Passour), âgé de 25 ans.

Il raconte que pendant l'automne de 1893, la maison de son oncle, située près de Guéliémansour, fut attaquée par une bande d'Arméniens armés, au nombre de quarante, parmi lesquels étaient Ossé, de Guéliéguzan, et Sako, de Chenik. Son oncle fut blessé à la tête d'un coup de hache, et 150 moutons et autres effets furent enlevés par les Arméniens. Jusqu'à présent plainte n'a pas été portée à l'autorité par crainte des Arméniens, qui avaient coupé les routes et à cause du brigandage desquels les Kurdes n'osaient se rendre ni à leurs champs ni à leurs moulins. Tout le monde connaît cette affaire, qui eut lieu pendant le jour; mais sur l'invitation du Président, il cite les noms de Dervich, Omer, Emin, Ahmet, Hamo, Djerdjo, et Behaeddin, comme pouvant fournir des preuves de la vérité de ce qu'il avance.

Le témoin avait appris, après l'attaque sur la maison de son oncle, que parmi les agresseurs étaient Ossé et Sako, qu'il ne connaissait pas auparavant.

Le troisième témoin entendu est le nommé Emin, fils de Kasso, Kurde appartenant à la subdivision Reckki de la tribu des Badekanli.

Ce témoin se plaint de ce que les Arméniens en armes, en nombre d'environ 400, parmi lesquels étaient Erko, de Chenik, Manonk et Artin, de Semal, Serko de Guéliéguzan, et Gaspar, et Mourad, et Hatcho, de Talori, étant venus vers le 15 Août, 1894, à leur pâturage d'été où se trouvaient cinq ou six tentes Kurdes, les ont attaqués et après avoir tué quatre hommes et en avoir blessé quatre autres, ont enlevé 300 moutons. Les

Arméniens ont grossièrement insulté le Prophète, leurs Cheikhs, et la religion Musulmane.

Deux ou trois jours après, les Kurdes portèrent plainte à l'autorité de Passour, qui fit procéder à une enquête.

Invité à désigner des personnes qui pourraient témoigner de cette affaire il répond que tous les Badikanlis et tous les habitants de Koulp le savent, et cite en particulier Abdi Husso et Ali Husso, des Badikanli; Amo Ahmé, du village de Guizik; et Osso, du village de Ghalumano.

Antérieurement aucune dispute ne s'était produite entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens; le témoin ignore la cause de l'attaque qu'il raconte.

Questionné sur les événements de l'Antok-Dagh, le témoin déclare avoir vu lui-même les Arméniens brûler leurs maisons et se retirer ensuite à la montagne. Il rétracte ensuite cette déclaration en disant qu'il ne l'a pas vu lui-même, mais qu'il l'a entendu dire par des habitants de Koulp et de Khian à son retour de Khazali, où il s'était rendu pour affaires. Le témoin affirme n'avoir vu aucun soldat à l'époque des événements qui se sont produits à l'Antok-Dagh.

La déposition du quatrième témoin, nommé Simo, fils de Boghos, de Semal, n'étant pas terminée pendant cette séance, sera donnée intégralement dans le procès-verbal de la séance où elle sera achevée.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 17 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 29 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 27, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le premier témoin entendu est le Kurde Badikanli nommé Mirzo-ben-Ali, du village de Rechki, dépendant du district de Guendj, âgé de 50 ans, mandé par la Commission.

Il confirme les déclarations du Kurde Emin-ben-Kasso écouté dans la séance précédente et relatives à l'attaque dans les tentes Kurdes campées au nombre d'une vingtaine à Cheu, leur pâturage d'été près de Chenik et Semal auraient été l'objet au mois d'Août 1894 de la part de 400 ou 500 Arméniens de Kavir et de Talori, ayant pour Chefs: Kirko, de Chenik; Manouk, de Semal; Ové, de Guéliéguzan; Gaspard, de Talori; et Mourad, de Talori.

Le témoin ajoute qu'informé de cette attaque, il se porta avec vingt ou trente autres Kurdes au secours du dit Emin et vit lui-même quatre homme tués par les Arméniens:

Haïdar-ben-Mcho, Youssouf-ben-Osman, Rossoul-ben-Mehémet, Hussein-ben-Omar, et quatre autres blessés: Hussein-ben-Khasso, Mahmoud-ben-Osso, Abdullah-ben-Hassan, Amo-ben-Amo.

Il ignore s'il y a eu des blessés ou des morts parmi les Arméniens; il sait que Mourad se trouvait parmi eux car ils criaient en combattant, "Nous sommes les gens de Mourad."

Le témoin déclare que les Kurdes Rechki et lui-même se trouvaient dans son village lors des événements sur l'Antok-Dagh.

Il n'a pas vu des troupes et a seulement appris l'arrivée du Muchir Zekki Pacha.

Ordinairement les Kurdes quittent leurs pâturages d'été à la fin d'Août ou au commencement de Septembre pour rentrer au village; mais il ne se souvient pas si en 1894 leur retour a eu lieu plus tôt ou plus tard qu'à l'ordinaire.

Il ignore les motifs de l'attaque qu'il a racontée et ajoute que auparavant il existait entre les gens et Kavar et les Kurdes Rechki des rapports de commerce qui cessèrent depuis les actes de brigandage exercés par les Arméniens, aux villages desquels lui-même n'est jamais allé.

Le deuxième témoin est le Kurde nommé Salik-ben-Ali, du village de Kerili, district de Khoulp, âgé de 35 ans, marié, fermier.

Il raconte l'attaque faite par les Arméniens sur le Kurde Rechki, Emin-ben-Khusso, en termes presque identiques à ceux employés par le témoin précédent, Mirzo-ben-Ali, mais il ajoute: l'attaque en question a eu lieu environ le 15 Août. Son pâturage d'été, où il y

avait une quinzaine de tentes; se trouvant non loin de là, il a entendu des coups de fusil et il s'est rendu sur la place. Au moment de son arrivée le combat avait déjà cessé. Les Arméniens s'étaient retirés en tirant des coups de fusil et en emportant des moutons.

Il les a encore aperçu à portée de fusil et a distingué parmi eux les Chefs déjà cités par Mirzo.

Mourad, qu'il n'avait jamais vu, lui a été alors montré par les Kurdes Rechki qui le connaissaient, leur résidence étant plus rapprochée de Talori que la sienne.

Les Arméniens en se retirant criaient aux Kurdes: "Allez à Damas," et insultaient leur religion et le Prophète.

Quand les troupes vinrent lors des événements de l'Antok-Dagh le témoin se trouvait dans ses tentes avec d'autres Kurdes, au nombre de dix à quinze.

Il n'avait pas peur des Arméniens qui, à ce qu'il a entendu dire, s'étaient réunis sur l'Antok-Dagh et y commettaient des actes de brigandage attendu que les Kurdes se portaient naturellement secours contre eux.

Le témoin n'a pas vu de soldats et n'a pas appris qu'ils aient poursuivi les Arméniens pendant leur fuite.

Invité à expliquer comment il peut désigner précisément les Arméniens cités par lui comme ayant pris part à l'attaque sur Emin-ben-Khasso, le témoin répond les connaître puisque ce sont les Chefs de leurs villages.

L'interrogatoire du témoin nommé Simo, fils de Boghos, de Semal, est continué dans cette séance, sans être achevé.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 18 in No. 99.

Procès-verbal No. 30 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of February 28, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le premier témoin entendu dans cette séance est Omer, fils de Pourto, de Guéliémandom, âgé de 45 ans, fermier.

Invité par le Président de raconter ce qu'il sait sur les événements de l'année dernière, il fait la déclaration suivante.

Au commencement du printemps de 1891, deux Arméniens de son village nommés Serko et Tato se rendirent à Talori pour s'y procurer du fer pour leurs charrues. A leur retour ils racontèrent confidentiellement au témoin que Mourad était à Talori ainsi que les Chefs des villages de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan, qu'il leur avait conseillé de cacher tous leurs effets dans leurs maisons dans des fosses et dans les champs, en disant: "Nous nous révolterons contre le Gouvernement: nous verserons du sang et créerons une Arménie."

A la fin de Juillet ou au commencement d'Août 1894, continue le témoin, voyant que les Arméniens commençaient à se réunir en bandes armées sur l'Antok-Dagh, la moitié se trouvant sur la montagne même, l'autre moitié sur les flancs, les habitants de Guéliémandour leur envoyèrent ces mêmes Arméniens Serko et Tato pour les prier de ne leur pas faire du mal puisque eux aussi étaient des Raïas. Ces deux messagers, une fois revenus, racontèrent qu'une partie des Arméniens, qui étaient sur l'Antok-Dagh, voulaient attaquer les deux compagnies de troupes de Merguemouzan pour se jeter ensuite sur les tribus des Kurdes Bekranli et Badikanli, mais que les villageois de Chenik et Semal étaient d'avis qu'il fallait d'abord attaquer les Kurdes, puis les soldats, car s'ils commençaient par ces derniers, les Kurdes se porteraient à leur secours.

Les Arméniens, au dire du témoin, réunis en bandes, se livraient à des actes de brigandage. Ils volèrent des bestiaux au Kurde Ahmé, en lui tuant son berger; ils s'emparèrent également du bétail de Ferko Ogbu, de celui de Hassan Chenouki, dont ils blessèrent le fils. Ils tuèrent, en outre, un Kurde Khianli, dont le corps mutilé fut apporté par les Kurdes au village de Guéliémansour où le témoin l'a vu, et ensuite au campement des troupes à Merguemouzan.

Les Arméniens tuèrent également un Kurde Karikanli nommé Silo, dont la tête, portée à Mourad, fut payée par lui 5 medjidiés.

D'autres Bekranli qui, au bruit des coups de fusil, s'étaient portés à leur secours, furent à leur tour attaqués par les habitants des quatre villages de Talori, Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan, avec Mourad, et perdirent plusieurs d'entre eux.

Le lendemain les Badikanli, étant aussi venus au secours des Bekranli, il s'ensuivit un combat qui dura deux jours et à la suite duquel les Arméniens se retirèrent derrière les parapets qu'ils avaient faits sous l'Antok-Dagh.

Le témoin explique que le combat avait lieu près de Semal et qu'il a pu le voir lui-même, ce village ainsi que Chenik étant visible des pâturages d'été de Guéliémansour. Le nombre des Kurdes engagés était pour les Bekranli de soixante à soixante-dix et pour les Badikanli une centaine.

Il ignore le nombre des Arméniens et sait seulement qu'ils appartenaient aux quatre villages de Chenik, Semal, Guéliéguzan, et Talori.

Le lendemain matin, le témoin ayant aperçu de la fumée, apprit d'un Badikanli, à qui il en demandait la cause, que les Arméniens avaient brûlés leurs maisons et s'étaient retirés à la montagne. Il entendit aussi raconter à ce même Kurde Badikanli qu'un ou deux jours après les soldats étaient venus à Guéliéguzan où avait eu lieu entre eux et les Arméniens un combat qui avait duré du matin jusqu'au soir et dans lequel il y avait eu des hommes tués des deux côtés. Le témoin lui-même entendit les coups de fusil, &c., trouvant à son pâturage d'été aux environs de l'Antok-Dagh. Le lendemain du combat il vit le matin qu'aucun Arménien n'était resté sur l'Antok-Dagh, les uns s'étant enfouis vers Koulp, les autres vers Khian et Sassoun.

Le témoin dépose, en outre, que Guéliémansour, village moitié Musulman, moitié Chrétien, se trouve à une demi-journée de distance de Talori, environ à trois heures de Guéliéguzan, et à une demi-heure de l'Antok-Dagh; il se trouvait au village pendant les mois de Mai, Juin, Juillet, et Août de l'année dernière.

Le témoin a vu de ses propres yeux des bandes armées d'Arméniens qui se promenaient sur l'Antok-Dagh et qui criaient aux Kurdes en les insultant: "Allez à Dauns." Il n'a pas été témoin oculaire des brigandages commis par les Arméniens et dont il a fait récit; mais il explique que de pareils faits ne peuvent être cachés, qu'ils sont connus de tout le monde, que si les routes n'étaient pas fermées par la neige, beaucoup de Kurdes, de Musulmans, viendraient exposer leurs plaintes devant la Commission.

Interrogé si lui-même ou quelque autre habitant de son village a eu à souffrir des Arméniens qui se promenaient en bandes, le témoin répond négativement. Les Arméniens ne touchaient pas à lui, parce qu'il est Raïa, c'est-à-dire Kurde; qu'ils n'attaquaient que les Kurdes de tribu; la raison étant, d'après le témoin, qu'ils voulaient chasser ces derniers pour arriver à créer une Arménie.

Il n'a pas connaissance des deux attaques que les Arméniens auraient faites: la première sur des Kurdes Latchkanli se trouvant au pâturage d'été de Mergueboli (déposition d'Amo, fils de Mcho, séance du 26 Février, 1895, Procès-verbal No. 28); la seconde sur les Kurdes Rechki se trouvant au pâturage d'été de Cheu (déposition d'Emin-ben-Khasso, même séance et même procès-verbal que ci-dessus).

Par contre il a entendu parler des attaques des Arméniens sur la maison du Kurde Salib-ben-Zoro (même séance et même procès-verbal), et sur le fils de Dervich Aghu (séance du 25 Février, 1895, Procès-verbal No. 27).

Le témoin affirme que les soldats de Merguemouzan ne se sont pas mêlés au combat ci-dessus raconté et survenu entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens près de Semal.

Les Arméniens, lors de leur fuite de l'Antok-Dagh, n'étaient pas poursuivis par les soldats, et il n'a jamais entendu parler d'une chose telle que le massacre par ces derniers de femmes et d'enfants.

Il n'a pas davantage connaissance que des Arméniens se soient plaints d'agressions de la part des tribus Kurdes.

Interrogé sur l'endroit où se trouvent les deux Arméniens Serko et Tato, dont il fait mention, le témoin répond qu'ils sont allés pendant l'automne dernier à Khazali du côté de Diarbekir.

Le deuxième témoin entendu est Ahmet, fils de Hamo, de Guéliémansour, âgé de 35 ans, fermier.

Il répète en termes presque identiques le récit du témoin précédent, Omer-ben-Pourto. Il ajoute que la proposition d'attaquer les soldats à Merguémouzan avant d'attaquer les Kurdes, venaient des Arméniens de Talori et Guéliéguzan; que le soir même du jour de la fuite des Arméniens à l'Antok-Dagh après leurs combats avec les Kurdes, il a vu la fumée monter de leurs villages, et que Tato et Serko lui avaient expliqué que c'étaient les Arméniens qui, sur l'ordre de Mourad, devaient brûler leurs maisons pour se rendre à la montagne, et se révolter contre le Gouvernement.

Le témoin lui-même a vu de la hauteur nommée Zinavi, située à un quart d'heure de

distance de leur pâturage d'été, le combat entre les Arméniens et les soldats à Guéliéguzan, et il a entendu dire à ces derniers venus à ce même pâturage, que quelques-uns d'entre eux avaient été tués. Les pertes des Arméniens, d'après eux-mêmes, montaient à sept hommes. Dans les combats précédents entre Kurdes et Arméniens la perte des deux côtés était de trente à quarante hommes.

Le Kurde Ahmé, de Koulp, à qui les Arméniens auraient volé des moutons, était le témoin, du village de Nédéran.

Interrogé sur les deux Arméniens, Tato et Serko, de Guéliémansour, le témoin répond ne les avoir pas vus depuis un mois. Ils sont partis avec leur famille à Silivan, du côté de Diarbekir.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

No. 100.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 249.) *Constantinople, April 20, 1895.*

My Lord,

I INCLOSE, for your Lordship's information, a translation by Mr. Eliot of an interesting Report by M. Prjévalsky, the Russian Delegate at Moosh, on the proceedings of the Commission. According to this Report, which has just been communicated to me by M. de Nélidoff, the Turkish Commissioners have endeavoured to prevent witnesses hostile to the Turkish Government from being heard, and have not shown the impartiality which is essential to a thorough inquiry. M. Prjévalsky describes the Armenians as having lost courage, and making no further efforts to give evidence.

His views are fully confirmed by what I have heard from Mr. Shipley.

I called to-day on M. de Nélidoff, and proposed that we should draw up a Memorandum founded on M. Prjévalsky's Report, and that the three Ambassadors should communicate it to the Turkish Government, with an intimation that if stringent orders were not forthwith sent to the Commission to change their mode of proceeding, we should recommend our Governments to withdraw the Delegates.

M. de Nélidoff then informed me that he had received two later Reports by telegraph from M. Prjévalsky: in the first he stated that he had spoken seriously to the President of the Commission, and in the second, dated nine days after the Report, 29th March (10th April), he said that a change for the better had taken place, and that the Commissioners were now acting more impartially.

Under these circumstances, he thought it better to await further information.

As I am expecting an answer from Mr. Shipley to a telegram which I sent to him on the 18th instant after receiving your Lordship's telegram No. 91 of the 17th, I offered no objection. The telegram in question asked for Mr. Shipley's views as to the future proceedings of the Commission, which seemed to be dragging on without much prospect of a satisfactory result, and requested him to sound his colleagues as to making joint suggestions in regard to any action that should be taken.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 100.

Secret Report from the Russian Delegate, dated March 20, 1895.

(Translation.)

AS a supplement to my previous Reports respecting the course of the inquiry into the events of last year at Sassoon, I feel bound to draw your attention to the following:—

1. The inquiry is conducted under administrative pressure exercised by the local authorities.

The police keep a sharp look-out to prevent the inhabitants of the villages of Kavar and Talori, which were destroyed, from appearing at Moosh, where they might present their complaints to the Turkish Commission of Inquiry. They are almost forbidden to leave their villages, and are carefully watched. Those who do somehow manage to

reach Moosh are arrested, and then sent away from the town, as is confirmed by the following fact, among others:—

On the 20th February a Petition was handed to the Commission, stating that four of the inhabitants of the village of Akhpik (one of those which suffered during the events of last autumn) had arrived at Moosh with the intention of appearing before the Commission. They were, however, interrogated by the police and thrown into prison. The Delegates, regarding this as an infringement of the liberty of the inquiry, immediately demanded that these persons should be examined before the Commission, with a view of ascertaining the cause of their arrest. The Commission agreed, but let the matter drag on until the individuals had been sent from Moosh to Khajo, in Bitlis, and then communicated the report of the Mutessarif, representing them as brigands, who had been captured, disguised and masked, in the plain of Moosh.

Private information entirely contradicts these statements, and the Delegates, therefore, demanded that the persons in question should be summoned before the Commission. The Commission assented, but they have not yet been brought back to Moosh.

Witnesses for the Commission are selected mainly, if not entirely, by the local police. Hitherto, most of these witnesses were obtained from the Nahié of Khian (Kaza of Khulp), whither were dispatched for this purpose Taleb Effendi and Salih Aga. During the sitting of the 11th (23rd) March an inhabitant of the village of Ashbung, one Tepo, was examined, of whose presence the Commission could offer no explanation. The President often states that he has summoned the Mukhtars of different villages, whereas perfectly different persons are produced by the zaptiehs.

The witnesses thus summoned by the Commission may be divided according to the character of their evidence into two categories:—

(1.) The first repeat one and the same story, which they have learnt by heart, although they belong to different villages, and are chosen from among both Kurds and Armenians.

(2.) Others, belonging to the Armenians of Talori and Kavar, mostly refuse to answer the questions addressed to them, excusing themselves on the ground of their entire ignorance of what happened after their flight from the villages.

Besides this, some witnesses gave obviously false testimony, which could not be explained away by any personal consideration or motives. Such were the depositions of the priest, Parsegh (Protocol 21), the Kurds, Reshid (Protocols 23 and 24), Famer and Ahmed (Protocol 30). The depositions of the last two were based mainly on the statements of two Armenians, who, as appeared from the examination of other witnesses, left for Diarbekir as early as the autumn of 1893, and, therefore, could not possibly have taken any part in the events of last year.

While the Armenian witnesses are at Moosh they are kept under the care of the local police, which cannot but influence their depositions. At the sitting of the 4th (16th) March, a certain Shalibaz from the village of Semal, whose husband was, according to her statement, killed at Ghelié-Guzan, gave definite and substantial answers. Next day, after spending a night at Moosh, she refused to add anything to her previous depositions. On returning to the village she said to her son, "What is the use of telling the truth; they will kill us for it, as they killed your father?"

Kego, of Talori (sitting of the 28th February), after passing a night in the keeping of the Commissaire of Police, announced his intention of making any deposition respecting what happened at Talori in 1894.

Two witnesses, Mirzo, of Talori (sitting on the 28th February), and Ego, of Semal (the 17th February), were arrested at Moosh after making depositions before the Commission.

It is hard to suppose that such acts are done by the local police without the knowledge of the Commission of Inquiry.

2. The Commission is not impartial in its proceedings, as is proved by what I have mentioned, and by the manner of conducting the inquiry. Deposition favourable to the Turks are not interrupted by the President, and are carefully written down by the Secretary. But witnesses who speak against the authorities and the troops merely answer the questions put to them, and the interrogatory is conducted in the most confusing fashion in order to entrap them in contradiction of detail.

From the very beginning of the inquiry the Commission divided the persons whom it interrogated into two groups, accused and witnesses, which proved the existence in their minds of a preconceived idea respecting the events of Sassoon.

The Delegates called the attention of the Commission to this on the 6th (18th) March.

The partiality of the Commission is also shown by the fact that no attempt was made to clear up such important facts as the murder by soldiers of women and children, or of those who surrendered at Ghelié-Guzan. The Commission declared in its sitting of the 5th (17th) March that the essential facts of the Sassoon incident were sufficiently clear, and that only matters of detail remained, which could be considered after a journey to Bulis to examine Mourad. In reality, however, neither the above-mentioned questions nor the essential character of the incident had been elucidated, and the Commission had not even touched on the question of how far such villages as Akhpik, Khöting, &c., had had any share in the affair.

Having this in view, and also the partiality of the Commission and its obvious intention to conceal all facts unfavourable to the Turks (in which they availed themselves of the co-operation of the local authorities), the Delegates expressed to the Commission their opinion that a journey to Bitlis would be premature, as the inquiry into many important questions begun at Moosh ought to be finished there, and that an interruption of the Commission would prejudice its chances of success.

As you are aware, the opinion of the Delegates was taken into consideration, and the Commission is still continuing its investigations at Moosh. On the 9th (21st) March there was submitted to it a list of the persons who must be examined before leaving for Bitlis.

3. The hopes of Armenians here were at first raised by the arrival of the Commission and foreign Delegates, but their present temper can only be described as utter dejection. They see clearly that the presence of the Delegates has changed nothing in the methods of Turkish administration, and fear of the consequences makes them refrain from every kind of political agitation. The Delegates for their part thought they could take no steps for arousing the Armenians, but the present temper of these latter and the action of the Turkish Commission have compelled them to take a more active part in the investigations, with the object of discovering the truth.

It is all the more incumbent on the Commission to most carefully investigate the events of last year, because the Consuls at Erzeroum and the English correspondents are also conducting an inquiry, though not on the spot, into these questions.

The publication of the depositions made at Erzeroum must produce an immense sensation in the English press and society, and therefore if the Commission hush up these or other facts the result can only be injurious, and compromise the Turkish Government still more.

I should add that people at Moosh, in opposition to the depositions of Mevloud, speak of only one massacre of persons who had surrendered at Ghelié-Guzan.

The fact of the massacre of women in the church (deposition of Ano, of Shenik) is little known here. A person well acquainted with the events of last year could not tell me in what village this occurrence took place.

No. 101.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 26.)

(No. 250.) *Constantinople, April 22, 1895.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith, with reference to my telegram No. 143 of yesterday's date, translation of the official communication inserted in the Turkish newspapers of the 21st April, giving the composition of the Turkish Commission appointed to inquire into the present state of affairs in the Vilayets of the Empire.

The Commission will be occupied entirely with the affairs of the Armenian provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 101.

Official Communication inserted in the Turkish Newspapers of April 21, 1895.

(Translation.)

THE Commission instituted for the purpose of inquiring into the present state of affairs in the Vilayets of the Empire, and placed under the presidency of his Excellency

Turkhan Pasha, is composed of their Excellencies Hachim Bey, and Ahmed Refik Bey, Under-Secretaries of State (Musteshars) of the Ministries of Justice and Interior respectively; Chevki Bey, President of the Criminal Section at the Court of Cassation; the Grand Logothéte; Nichan Effendi, Director of the Local Foreign Press; Sirri Bey, Head of the Correspondence at the Ministry of Public Instruction; and Husni Effendi, Head of the Police.

The Commission will hold its first meeting to-day, Sunday, and will meet every day, except on Fridays and Sundays.

No. 102.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 27.)

(No. 254. Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 22, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copies, furnished me by the Armenian Patriarch, of correspondence which has passed between his Beatitude and the Ministry of Justice and Public Worship respecting the Sassoun incident and the appointment of a Bishop of Moush *ad interim*.

Your Lordship will perceive that the Turkish Government declined to listen to the representations of the Patriarch and contend that his functions are strictly limited to attending to the spiritual needs of his flock.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 102.

The Armenian Patriarch to Riza Pasha.

Le 9 Janvier (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

EN commençant à m'acquitter des devoirs de la dignité Patriarcale, à laquelle j'ai été appelé, mon premier soin a été d'examiner, avec toute l'attention requise, les documents relatifs aux questions pendantes dans le domaine religieux, ainsi qu'à l'administration des établissements de piété et de bienfaisance de la nation.

Lors de cet examen, la lecture des documents officiels arrivés au Patriarcat des localités habitées par les Arméniens, ainsi que des Pétitions adressées par nombre de mes ouailles, m'a convaincu que par suite de certains agissements contraires à toute justice, les Arméniens se trouvent en état d'alarme et de misère; et je regrette vivement d'avoir à entretenir votre Excellence de cette situation dans mon premier "takrir."

Ayant pour ligne de conduite, dans l'accomplissement des devoirs de ma mission, d'agir avec toute sincérité et une parfaite loyauté, je me propose de porter, en temps opportun, à la connaissance de votre Excellence, les renseignements arrivés au Patriarcat à ce sujet, ainsi que les causes qui provoquent cet état de choses, dont la continuation est d'un grand préjudice, tant au pays qu'à la communauté dont je suis le chef spirituel.

Pourtant parmi les nombreux faits qui forment l'ensemble de cette situation, ceux qui ont eu lieu en Août passé dans les villages du district de Sassoun, dans le Sandjak de Mouch, ayant occupé, d'une manière toute spéciale, l'attention et alarmé l'opinion publique, j'espère que l'obligation dans laquelle je me trouve de devancer, par une démarche à ce sujet, toute autre demande ou sollicitation que j'aurais à adresser, rencontrera l'indulgence de votre Excellence.

Le Gouvernement Impérial a envoyé sur les lieux des Commissaires pour faire une enquête au sujet des dits incidents. Il est pourtant à penser que, par suite de l'effroi et de la frayeur auxquels elle se trouve sujette, la population n'osera pas exposer la vérité en toute liberté. D'un autre côté, le Prélat Nersès, Métropolitain de Mouch, se trouvant depuis deux ans en prison, comme plusieurs autres Evêques et ecclésiastiques, et le Prélat Ohannès, de la congrégation du Couvent de Mouch qui avait été choisi pour s'acquitter, *ad interim*, des fonctions de Métropolitain, ayant donné sa démission définitive, à la suite des difficultés de la situation et de la gravité que les affaires ont prise, la population se trouve dépourvue d'un chef officiel, pour pouvoir faire connaître ses griefs et formuler ses demandes.

Dans cette situation, la nécessité d'envoyer à Mouch, de la part du Patriarcat, un dignitaire ecclésiastique, avec la mission de gérer *ad interim* les affaires du diocèse, jusqu'au retour du titulaire, le Prélat Nersès, de renseigner régulièrement le Patriarcat et d'aider les membres de la Commission d'Enquête pour établir la vérité, étant évidente, je sollicite l'autorisation de faire partir immédiatement le dignitaire ecclésiastique qui sera choisi pour cette mission provisoire.

J'ai l'honneur, &c.

Inclosure 2 in No. 102.

Riza Pasha to the Armenian Patriarch.

Le 21 Janvier (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

J'AI reçu le "takrir," par lequel votre Béatitude, entre autres questions, me faisait savoir la démission de l'ecclésiastique qui avait été précédemment nommé Métropolitain *ad interim* de Mouch, et demandait l'autorisation de le remplacer par un autre ecclésiastique qui serait envoyé d'ici.

J'ai référé de ce "takrir" de votre Béatitude à la Sublime Porte.

Comme votre Béatitude le sait, l'usage établi pour la nomination des Chefs spirituels, titulaires ou *ad interim*, est de faire connaître le nom de la personne choisie par un "takrir" simple.

Votre Béatitude en référant la chose au Gouvernement avant de choisir l'ecclésiastique qui serait délégué à cette mission, agit contrairement à cet usage.

Ce procédé, ainsi que le libellé du "takrir," prouvent que votre Béatitude veut faire donner à ce fonctionnaire ecclésiastique et sa mission un caractère spécial.

La mission des Patriarcats, ainsi que des Chefs spirituels et du clergé des provinces se borne à la gestion des affaires spirituelles et ecclésiastiques de leurs communautés; et les privilèges, que le Gouvernement Impérial a octroyés aux communautés dans sa haute magnanimité, tournent autour de cet axe.

D'autre part, il est évident qu'en toutes sortes d'affaires les demandes et sollicitations de tous les sujets de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan sont acceptées par les autorités compétentes, en tout temps et sur tous les points de l'Empire, sans aucune distinction de race ou de religion.

Les Patriarcats n'ont aucun droit et aucune compétence de faire des démarches officielles dans des affaires administratives. Et quoiqu'il soit d'usage d'adresser, de temps à autre, des demandes non officielles pour ceux des membres de la communauté qui ayant sollicité l'intermédiaire du Patriarcat, la justesse de leurs demandes paraissent fondées à celui-ci, les démarches de cette catégorie se trouvant, par principe, en dehors de la compétence des Patriarcats, sont présentées sous forme de Mémorandum privé, non signé.

J'ajoute à ces considérations que si votre Béatitude désire envoyer à Mouch un ecclésiastique simplement pour remplir la fonction spirituelle du Métropolitain et adresse à ce sujet un "takrir" conforme à l'usage et aux précédents, l'exécution des formalités d'usage est tout naturel.

Veuillez, &c.

Inclosure 3 in No. 102.

The Armenian Patriarch to Riza Pasha.

Le 28 Janvier (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

J'AI lu avec une parfaite attention le "theskéré" Ministériel que votre Excellence avait fait l'honneur de m'adresser, à la date du 21 Janvier, 1895, en réponse au "takrir" par lequel, après avoir exposé mes vues sur certaines questions, j'avais sollicité l'autorisation d'envoyer à Mouch un Métropolitain *ad interim*.

Votre Excellence en déclarant que le libellé du en "takrir," ainsi que le fait de solliciter l'autorisation d'envoyer un Métropolitain *ad interim* à Mouch, avant d'en faire la nomination, provient du désir de faire donner un caractère spécial à la mission de cet ecclésiastique, me fait savoir que la compétence du Patriarcat ainsi que celle des chefs spirituels des provinces, se bornent à la gestion des affaires spirituelles et ecclésiastiques de la communauté, et que les privilèges ecclésiastiques tournent exclusivement autour de cet axe.

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Votre Excellence dit en même temps que le Gouvernement Impérial accepte indistinctement les requêtes et sollicitations de tous ses sujets, qu'il ne sera jamais donné un caractère spécial, en dehors de ses attributions, à la mission des chefs spirituels, que le Patriarcat n'a pas le droit d'adresser des "takrirs" officiels pour des affaires se trouvant hors du domaine religieux, mais qu'il est possible de faire des sollicitations avec des Mémorandums privés, non signés.

Comme votre Excellence le sait parfaitement, les chefs spirituels, en même temps que leurs devoirs religieux et ecclésiastiques, ont aussi la mission de prêcher le peuple, dont ils sont les pasteurs, pour le garder dans les voies de la morale et de la fidélité; ils doivent également consoler ceux d'entre eux qui tombent en malheur, et faciliter dans la mesure du possible leurs affaires. Ces chefs ecclésiastiques, qui se font auprès de l'autorité les interprètes des sentiments de reconnaissance et de contentement de la communauté, quand l'occasion s'en présente, ont aussi, comme devoir de sujétion et de fidélité la fonction de consoler la population et de l'aider, en faisant connaître sous leurs signatures, les faits portant préjudice aux intérêts de l'Empire et de ses sujets quand ces faits sont commis à l'égard de leurs ouailles.

La faculté que les solliciteurs ont de s'adresser aux autorités compétentes est indéniable. D'autre part, le Patriarcat n'est pas satisfait de voir les chefs spirituels avoir à s'occuper d'affaires administratives et judiciaires, affaires qui entraînent toujours beaucoup de peine et de difficultés. Pourtant la prise en considération des doléances des habitants des provinces au sujet des crimes commis par des personnes malintentionnées dans les villes, villages, et hameaux étant indispensable et les provinciaux étant souvent intimidés par des menaces, tandis que leur ignorance en ce qui concerne la procédure à suivre pour défendre leurs droits devant les Tribunaux et pour prouver les faits qu'ils avancent, est notoire, de même que la situation encore plus précaire, à laquelle se trouvent livrés les paysans par suite de leur inaptitude de pouvoir exposer leurs doléances et souvent même de parler la langue officielle du pays, les intérêts bien entendus du pays et de ses sujets, nécessitent l'accomplissement des devoirs susmentionnés par les chefs ecclésiastiques.

Les faits qu'obligent le Patriarcat et les chefs spirituels d'avoir à s'occuper d'affaires de cette nature sont connus. A un moment où Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, notre auguste Maître, m'a ordonné par l'entremise de l'un de ses hauts fonctionnaires non seulement de faire connaître les faits faisant objet de griefs, sans en cacher aucun, mais encore de signaler les mesures propres à les écarter, l'avertissement de votre Excellence de ne pas présenter des "takrirs" signés sur les griefs de mes ouailles et de me contenter d'adresser des Mémorandums privés non signés, réduit le pouvoir Patriarcal à la situation d'un simple rapporteur non officiel.

En espérant que votre Excellence appréciera le bien fondé de ces considérations que j'ai pris la liberté de présenter à son attention, j'ai l'honneur de faire remarquer que ma conduite est dictée par le désir de me conformer à la volonté de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, qui enjoint à tout dignitaire de servir le pays et l'Empire avec sincérité, et je sollicite de nouveau l'autorisation d'envoyer un dignitaire ecclésiastique à Mouch, pour s'acquitter *ad interim* des fonctions du Métropolitain, jusqu'au retour du titulaire qui, comme mon précédent "takrir" le disait, se trouve actuellement en prison.

J'ai l'honneur, &c.

Inclosure 4 in No. 102.

Riza Pasha to the Armenian Patriarch.

Le 6 Février (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

J'AVAIS déjà précédemment référé à la Sublime Porte au sujet du "takrir" circonstancié, par lequel votre Béatitude sollicitait l'autorisation d'envoyer à Mouch un dignitaire ecclésiastique, qu'elle nommerait comme Métropolitain *ad interim*.

La demande que formule votre Béatitude à ce sujet tend à faire donner à la mission de cet ecclésiastique un caractère spécial, en dehors de sa fonction spirituelle.

La compétence des dignitaires ecclésiastiques est limitée aux affaires spirituelles de leurs ouailles; jamais le Gouvernement n'a présenté au peuple les dignitaires d'un Patriarcat, comme compétent dans des affaires appartenant au domaine des lois existantes et de l'Administration civile; reconnaître une telle compétence serait d'ailleurs contraire aux lois politiques et au système administratif du pays.

En invitant de nouveau l'attention de votre Béatitude sur ces considérations, j'ai à ajouter que son Altesse le Grand Vizir, par un "theskéré" en date de 5 Février, 1895, m'a fait savoir que le Gouvernement Impérial fera le nécessaire si votre Béatitude veut envoyer à Mouch un Métropolitain *ad interim* pour s'occuper des fonctions spirituelles de cette dignité.

Veuillez, &c.

Inclosure 5 in No. 102.

The Armenian Patriarch to Riza Pasha.

Le 4 Février (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

LE Patriarcat avait déjà reçu quelques renseignements sur la tragique affaire de Sassoun.

Pourtant une lettre (rapport) qui y est parvenue dernièrement, contenant une description détaillée de la dite affaire, qui aurait pris le caractère d'un massacre général, je prends la liberté d'en présenter la traduction à l'attention de votre Excellence.

Comme cette lecture prouvera à votre Excellence, plusieurs villages ont été ruinés et ceux des habitants qui ont pu échapper au massacre, se trouvent affolés et en complet état de dénuement.

Par suite de l'urgence de consoler cette population et vu l'absence du Métropolitan titulaire de l'Evêché de Mouch, qui ne se trouve pas à son poste, à cause des circonstances connues, je réitère la demande d'autorisation que j'avais précédemment adressée au Gouvernement Impérial, dans le but d'envoyer dans cette ville un dignitaire ecclésiastique, avec le titre de Métropolitan *ad interim* et chargé, en même temps, de faciliter la tâche de la Commission d'Enquête.

Espérant que cette demande rencontrera l'approbation de votre Excellence et dans l'attente d'une réponse favorable, j'ai l'honneur, &c.

Inclosure 6 in No. 102.

Riza Pasha to the Armenian Patriarch.

Le 17 Février (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

PAR un "takrir" auquel était joint la traduction d'une pièce contenant certains renseignements sur Sassoun, votre Béatitude avait formulé des demandes.

Le dit "takrir" ayant été communiqué à son Altesse le Grand Vizir, son Altesse m'ordonne par un "theskéré" d'avertir votre Béatitude que la Commission envoyée sur les lieux a pour mission de faire une enquête juste et impartiale; qu'elle agira avec une égale impartialité pour tous les sujets de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, et que l'écrit annexé au dit "takrir," contenant une foule de calomnies, est non seulement indigne d'être envoyé à la Commission d'Enquête, mais encore d'être accepté comme pièce officielle adressée par le Patriarcat au Gouvernement Impérial.

Son Altesse le Grand Vizir m'ordonne par le même "theskéré" d'avertir votre Béatitude qu'elle n'a pas le droit d'intervenir dans les questions en dehors des affaires spirituelles, et que, par conséquent, elle doit borner ses démarches à sa mission religieuse.

Veuillez, &c.

Inclosure 7 in No. 102.

The Armenian Patriarch to Riza Pasha.

Le 18 Mars (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

EN réponse au "takrir" par lequel j'avais eu l'honneur de remettre à votre Excellence la traduction d'une lettre (rapport) arrivée dernièrement au Patriarcat et contenant la description de l'affaire de Sassoun, j'ai reçu le "theskéré" de votre Excellence en date du 21 Février, 1895, par lequel elle veut bien me faire savoir que le

dit "takrir" et la pièce annexe ayant été communiqués à son Altesse le Grand Vizir, son Altesse a ordonné de me faire savoir l'envoi de la part du Gouvernement Impérial des Commissaires chargés de faire une enquête juste et impartiale de l'affaire et de m'avertir, en même temps, de ne pas dépasser les attributions de ma mission spirituelle, cette mission ne conférant pas le droit d'intervenir dans les questions se trouvant en dehors du domaine religieux.

Étant appelé par l'élection de ma nation et par Iradé Impérial à la dignité Patriarcale, et mes agissements n'ayant d'autre but que le maintien des intérêts bien entendus du puissant Empire Ottoman et de mes ouailles, il est bien naturel qu'un tel avertissement me cause une sincère affliction.

Présenter des "takrirs" au sujet des déprédations et abus continuels commis dans les provinces habitées par les Arméniens et solliciter des mesures de nature à les faire cesser, est une conséquence inhérente du devoir que j'ai assumé de servir fidèlement le Gouvernement et la nation. Aussi crois-je devoir présenter quelques explications, pour exposer mes vues à ce sujet.

Le devoir du Patriarche et des Métropolitains se divise principalement en deux catégories dont l'une embrasse l'administration des affaires spirituelles et religieuses de la nation, tandis que l'autre a trait à l'obligation qui leur incombe de servir fidèlement Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et l'Empire Ottoman. Aussi les chefs spirituels, outre le devoir qu'ils ont de garder leurs ouailles Chrétiennes dans la voie de probité et de vertu tracée par la religion, pour qu'elles puissent mériter la félicité éternelle, doivent-ils aussi consoler le peuple et tâcher par leur médiation de lui procurer la sécurité et la tranquillité, quand celui-ci s'adresse à lui et implore sa compassion en exposant les déprédations et les souffrances auxquelles il se trouve en butte.

Il est donc évident que ces démarches et médiations sont une conséquence naturelle tant de leur mission religieuse que de l'obligation qu'ils ont d'accomplir intégralement leurs devoirs de fidélité envers le Gouvernement et le pays.

Faire des démarches auprès du Gouvernement Impérial et médier pour les besoins et les sollicitations du peuple n'est pas une innovation dans les relations des Patriarches et des Métropolitains avec le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté. Le fait que ces démarches et les médiations ne sont nullement défendues est prouvé par cela, que le Gouvernement Impérial, en reconnaissant et exemptissant le pouvoir spirituel du Patriarche et des Métropolitains de la nation Arménienne, pouvoir inhérent du sacerdoce, leur a reconnu en même temps le droit de faire des démarches et médiations de ce genre en délivrant, à la suite de "takrirs" présentés par le Patriarche, les "theskérés" qu'il lui a confiés pour faire parvenir à leurs adresses et en admettant les personnes déléguées par le Patriarcat dans les Commissions formées à la Sublime Porte, en différentes occasions, ainsi qu'à coopérer aux Commissaires enquêteurs envoyés à diverses époques par le Gouvernement dans les provinces.

Ces faits prouvent parfaitement qu'il entre dans les attributions du Patriarcat, d'aider par sa médiation ceux des membres de la communauté qui, se trouvant en souffrances, s'adressent à lui; cette médiation constitue, par sa nature même, l'un des services importants que le Patriarche et les chefs ecclésiastiques de la nation peuvent rendre au Gouvernement.

En outre il ressort de la teneur de l'Article 1 des Statuts Organiques de la nation Arménienne, approuvés par le Gouvernement Impérial, que dans des circonstances particulières le Patriarche sert d'intermédiaire pour la mise en exécution des ordres du Gouvernement Impérial, et Sa Majesté le Sultan, de même qu'à mes prédécesseurs, m'a ordonné aussi, à moi, de conseiller utilement le peuple.

Aussi, le devoir de porter à la connaissance du Gouvernement Impérial les plaintes et les besoins de mes ouailles et de solliciter des mesures propices à les faire cesser, prend sa naissance tant de la qualité du Patriarche de service d'intermédiaire dans l'exécution des ordres du Gouvernement Impérial, que de l'ordre susmentionné de Sa Majesté.

En dehors de ces considérations, je dois aussi ajouter que Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan m'a fait l'honneur de m'ordonner, d'abord par l'entremise de l'un de ses hauts fonctionnaires et ensuite par un Iradé verbal, qu'il a daigné émettre lors de l'audience qu'il a bien voulu m'accorder, d'exposer les sujets des plaintes de la nation, pour que des remèdes soient portés.

Comme j'ai eu l'honneur de le dire dans mon "takrir" en date de 26 Décembre, 1894, présenté en réponse à un "theskéré" de votre Excellence, le Patriarcat n'est pas satisfait d'avoir à s'occuper d'affaires politiques et judiciaires. Pourtant, quand des télégrammes et des lettres arrivent au Patriarcat de toutes parts se plaignant des privations et des souffrances subies à la suite de déprédations et d'abus, exposant que leurs démarches et sollicitations restent sans résultat, qu'ils sont dépourvus de tout moyen pour défendre leurs droits, &c., rester indifférent en présence d'un tel état de choses ou refuser son intermédiaire à ses démarches, a pour conséquence de réduire à l'impuissance le Patriarche et les Métropolitains dans l'accomplissement de leurs devoirs spirituels.

Une telle conduite aboutit à la dislocation de l'administration religieuse et alors les conseils que le Patriarche et les chefs religieux de la nation adressent au peuple ne peuvent pas avoir l'effet voulu. L'état de choses que cette situation crée est, sans nulle doute, bien loin d'être conforme aux intérêts du Gouvernement de la nation.

J'espère donc, Excellence, que cette explication et les considérations que j'ai pris la liberté d'exposer, seront appréciées par le Gouvernement et les "takrirs" adressés ne seront pas considérés comme intervention dans des affaires politiques, comme ils n'étaient considérés jusqu'à présent.

J'ai l'honneur, &c.

Inclosure 8 in No. 102.

Riza Pasha to the Armenian Patriarch.

Le 27 Mars (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

L'ÉCRIT de votre Béatitude en date du 18 Mars, 1895, que j'avais communiqué à son Altesse le Grand Vizir, étant inacceptable, comme ses précédents, son Altesse m'a ordonné de le retourner au Patriarcat, et d'avertir votre Béatitude de la nécessité d'employer un langage compatible avec les devoirs de sujétion et de fidélité, comme son prédécesseur le faisait.

Veuillez, &c.

Inclosure 9 in No. 102.

Riza Pasha to the Armenian Patriarch.

(Traduction.)

[RÉPONSE au "takrir" très circonstancié de Sa Béatitude, en date de 5 Février (v. s.), 1895, relatif aux griefs de la nation Arménienne et à ses aspirations légitimes, tendant à la création d'un nouvel état de choses, pouvant garantir, d'une manière durable, la sécurité de vie, des biens, et de l'honneur; ainsi que la liberté de culte, le maintien de l'individualité nationale, &c., dans les provinces habitées par les Arméniens.]

Le 7 Mars (v. s.), 1895.

Le "takrir" de votre Béatitude, se plaignant de prétendus faits, sujets de griefs de la part des Arméniens, qui jouissent en Turquie, avec toute la sécurité et la tranquillité désirables, des bienfaits continuels du Gouvernement Impérial, à l'instar des autres nations sujettes de l'Empire, ainsi qu'à la non exécution des mesures nécessaires dans les affaires présentées par les "takrirs" du Patriarcat à l'attention du Gouvernement Impérial, a été communiqué à son Altesse le Grand Vizir.

Ce "takrir," basé sur des racontars exagérés, en flagrante contradiction avec les faits et la réalité, est libellé, quant à sa teneur, d'une manière inconvenante pour un "takrir" officiel. Il se trouve en complète opposition avec les devoirs de sujétion et de fidélité, et jamais de pareilles démarches et sollicitations n'ont eu lieu de la part des Patriarcats.

Aussi son acceptation de la part du Gouvernement Impérial étant impossible, son Altesse le Grand Vizir m'a ordonné de retourner à votre Béatitude le dit "takrir" avec la pièce annexe.

En vous remettant les écrits susmentionnés, je vous prie, &c.

Inclosure 10 in No. 102.

The Armenian Patriarch to Riza Pasha.

Le 18 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

J'AI reçu le "teskéré" Ministériel, que votre Excellence m'avait fait l'honneur de m'adresser à la date du 4 Mars (v. s.), 1895, en réponse à mon "takrir" détaillé en date du 8 Février (v. s.), 1895, relatif aux faits faisant objet de griefs dans les provinces de l'Empire habitées par les Arméniens et à la situation, qui compromet le maintien intact de la liberté religieuse et des privilèges ecclésiastiques.

Dans cette réponse, votre Excellence, après avoir déclaré que la remise d'un tel "takrir" est incompatible avec les devoirs de sujétion et de fidélité, me fait savoir que les faits y relatés se réfèrent à des racontars exagérés contraires aux faits et que jusqu'à présent jamais une pareille démarche n'a eu lieu de la part des Patriarcats.

La démarche que j'avais pris la liberté de faire auprès du Gouvernement Impérial, en adressant ce "takrir," et les considérations que je m'étais permis d'y exposer, étaient basées sur cette conviction que les faits signalés se trouvaient en parfait accord avec la vérité. Et j'avais pris soin de joindre une liste partielle des "takrirs" adressés depuis des années par le Patriarcat au Gouvernement Impérial, justement pour prouver que les faits relatés, loin d'être controuvés pour les besoins d'une cause, étaient des réalités, qui, se répétant depuis de longues années, formaient les sujets des griefs de mes ouailles.

En ce qui concerne la déclaration de votre Excellence, par laquelle elle veut me faire savoir qu'une démarche pareille n'a jamais eu lieu de la part des autres Patriarcats, je prends la liberté d'attirer l'attention de votre Excellence sur le fait que le Patriarcat Arménien se trouve, par suite de la situation connue, en présence d'un état de choses dont la gravité ne peut être comparée avec la situation que les autres Patriarcats peuvent avoir à exposer.

En outre, les archives du Patriarcat et les pièces officielles y conservées, prouvent qu'à différentes dates des "takrirs" et des Mémorandums détaillés ont été présentés par le Patriarcat, et la nécessité d'introduire des réformes ayant été prouvée, et admise par le Gouvernement Impérial, des Commissions ont été formées à la Sublime Porte et des Commissaires enquêteurs envoyés dans les provinces.

Mon devoir envers Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, notre auguste Souverain, et le puissant Empire Ottoman, m'impose, comme à tout sujet fidèle, de m'acquitter d'une manière consciencieuse des charges imposées par ma fonction, et ne cachant rien de la vérité.

Aussi je ne croyais jamais que la démarche, que j'ai faite en toute sincérité, pour m'acquitter du devoir que j'ai assumé envers ma communauté, serait considérée comme contraire aux obligations de la sujétion et de fidélité.

Quoi qu'un tel avertissement soit cause d'une vraie affliction pour moi je prends la liberté de faire considérer à votre Excellence que, quant à moi, j'ai au moins la consolation d'avoir consciencieusement rempli les devoirs de fidélité, ainsi que ceux de ma mission spirituelle.

J'ai l'honneur, &c.

Inclosure 11 in No. 102.

Riza Pasha to the Armenian Patriarch.

Le 22 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

PAR un écrit en date du 4 Cheval (18 Mars, 1895), votre Béatitude déclare qu'elle a une parfaite conviction de la véracité des faits précédemment signalés, et qu'elle a joint une liste des "takrirs" adressés depuis des années par le Patriarcat au Gouvernement Impérial, justement pour prouver que les dits faits ne sont nullement controuvés pour les besoins d'une cause.

L'écrit de votre Béatitude est libellé avec d'étonnantes phrases et non seulement son acceptation à titre officiel, mais la simple conservation même dans les archives du Gouvernement d'un tel écrit étant inadmissible, par ordre de Son Altesse le Grand Vizir, j'avertis votre Béatitude que des écrits de ce genre, libellés d'une manière contraire aux usages officiels et en opposition, quant à leur teneur, avec les devoirs de fidélité, continueront à ne pas être acceptés et lus; mais si votre Béatitude se conforme dans ses démarches à l'exemple de ses prédécesseurs, toute demande et sollicitation légale de sa part sera naturellement prise en bonne considération.

En rendant à votre Béatitude, d'ordre de son Altesse le Grand Vizir, le dit écrit, je la prie d'agréer, &c.

No. 103.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 27.)

(No. 255. Confidential.)

Constantinople, April 23, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a document which I have received from the Armenian Patriarchate respecting the state of the Vilayet of Sivas.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 103.

Résumé of Reports communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarchate, April 22, 1895.

Sivas, le 15 *Janvier* (v. s.), 1895.

DANS le village de Tchaykurd, dépendant du Vilayet de Sivas, quatre Arméniens ont été emprisonnés pour avoir exercé leur droit de vote, en élisant un Notable de la localité, le Sieur Agop Missirian, comme membre du Conseil représentatif provincial de la communauté, siégeant à Sivas.

Cette élection avait lieu en conformité aux stipulations des Statuts Organiques de la nation, approuvés par le Gouvernement Impérial.

Le Gouvernement Provincial accuse les prisonniers d'être affiliés à un Comité révolutionnaire et d'avoir élu le dit Notable comme Sergent ou comme Major de ce prétendu Comité, dans lequel ils auraient le rang de simples soldats. Aucun indice d'une telle association n'existe; pourtant, malgré les démarches du Métropolitain, l'arrestation de ces personnes est maintenue.

Sivas, le 25 *Janvier* (v. s.), 1895.

Les ouvriers Arméniens de Sivas, s'occupant du métier de coutelier et confectionnant toute espèce de couteaux, sabres, &c., ont été défendus, il y a juste un an, d'exercer leur métier, et leurs marchandises saisies sans aucune indemnité.

Ces ouvriers, formant quinze boutiques environ, sont voués depuis ce temps à la misère la plus noire, le Gouvernement leur défend de s'occuper de la moindre réparation et même d'aiguiser des couteaux, sabres, &c. Leurs démarches pour faire cesser cette interdiction illégale et pour demander la remise des marchandises saisies, ne sont nullement prises en considération, tandis que les percepteurs mettent un acharnement inouï à exiger de ces pauvres gens, privés de tout gagne-pain, le paiement de leurs impôts.

Sivas, le 28 *Février* (v. s.), 1895.

Dans la nuit du 1er Février (v. s.), 1895, vers 3 heures à la Turque, le Caïmacam du district de Ténoss, dans le Vilayet de Sivas, accompagné de plusieurs gendarmes et de la population mâle du village Turc de Saglir, ainsi que de plusieurs habitants des villages de Kichla et de Tchelkseghan qui composaient une foule armée de 600 personnes, s'est rendu au village de Topadj, dépendant du dit district.

Cette foule, après avoir cerné le dit village, composé en tout de cinquante maisons, s'est dispersée dans les habitations où les femmes et les enfants ont dû subir divers mauvais traitements et où tous les biens de la population, ainsi que les céréales gardées comme nourriture d'hiver, ont été pillés et saccagés. Vingt-deux personnes arrêtées et envoyées à Ténoss sous la prévention d'appartenir à un Comité révolution-

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naire. Deux de ces personnes ont été plus tard relâchées mais le reste continue à rester sous les verroux sans aucun interrogatoire.

Il est avéré que ce procédé du Gouvernement est la conséquence de la délation de quatre personnes convaincues d'avoir participé à l'effraction commise, il y a deux ans, chez le Notable Arménien Dounigue Effendi, qui avait réussi à les faire châtier. Le Gouvernement a récompensé la délation de ces quatre malfaiteurs par leur élargissement.

A la suite de cet incident, toute la population s'est retirée dans les montagnes, où elle reste encore malgré les intempéries de la saison. Le Caïmacam défend aux habitants de Topudj de se rendre à Sivas pour porter plainte. La misère la plus noire règne parmi ces paysans, privés de tous leurs biens et de leurs foyers même, en une seule nuit.

Sivas, le 9 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

La situation est devenue ici de plus en plus menaçante à la suite de l'incident de Tokat. La méfiance à l'égard des Arméniens, dont le Gouvernement Provincial donne de nouvelles preuves à chaque mesure qu'il croit devoir prendre, encourage la population Turque à donner libre cours à son fanatisme, et à commettre toute espèce de vexation. Cet état de choses cause une tension de plus en plus aiguë dans les rapports entre les éléments Turc et Chrétien.

Les incidents suivants arrivés dernièrement montrent à quels dangers les Arméniens de Sivas se trouvent exposés :—

1. Le 3 Mars (v. s.) un Arménien, nommé Arsène Soukiassian, était tranquillement assis dans sa boutique sise dans le bazar appelé Mahkémé-Tcharchi, quand un enfant Turc a jeté une pièce de 10 paras dans cette boutique. L'Arménien s'est empressé de se lever pour ramasser la pièce d'argent, mais les boutiquiers Turcs de l'endroit se ruant sur lui l'ont jeté dans la rue et l'ont battu avec une telle violence que l'Arménien est tombé évanoui. Les Turcs, spectateurs de cette scène, ont excité leurs coreligionnaires par les paroles outrageantes qu'ils ont proférées contre la religion Chrétienne et la nation Arménienne. Des cris de " Nous sommes préparés à tout ; ce n'est pas la crainte d'une guerre de la part de quelques Puissances giaours qui nous empêchera d'agir comme nous l'entendons !" étaient entendus. L'Arménien a porté plainte auprès du Gouvernement Provincial, mais rien n'a été fait pour châtier les coupables.

2. Le même jour, vers minuit et demi du soir à la Turque, l'Arménien Khatchadour Zorayan se rendait à son domicile quand deux Turcs l'ont attaqué dans le quartier appelé Béziridjiarkassi, et après l'avoir très violemment battu, ont demandé de l'argent, en le menaçant de leurs couteaux ; l'Arménien ne s'est sauvé qu'en appelant au secours.

L'incident a été rapporté au Gouvernement par la victime ; mais aucun résultat n'a été obtenu.

3. Le 6 Mars (v. s.) une groupe de Musulmans, en partance pour les villes saintes de l'Islamisme, qui circulait dans les marchés de Sivas, accompagnée de Derviches, s'est jetée, par suite d'un prétexte des plus futiles, sur un jeune Arménien nommé Meguerditch Soulunian et l'a très cruellement battu. Ce jeune homme serait sans doute mort sous les coups, si un vieux Musulman, nommé Osman Agha, se trouvant en dehors de la procession, n'avait enfin eu pitié de lui et ne l'avait pris sous sa protection. Cet incident a été également rapporté au Gouvernement local, mais il n'y a eu aucun résultat.

4. Le 4 Mars, quelques marchands de légumes Arméniens s'étaient rendus au marché pour faire leurs achats, quand les marchands Turcs ont voulu prendre tout l'arrivage pour leur compte et ne rien laisser aux Arméniens ; ils ont répondu aux Arméniens, qui les priaient de leur laisser aussi quelque chose pour contenter leur clientèle, que les giaours ne devaient plus gagner d'argent, que tous leurs biens appartenaient aux Musulmans !

Les Arméniens ayant augmenté les prix de quelques marchandises, mises aux enchères, les Turcs se sont jetés sur eux, une grande bagarre a eu lieu et plusieurs Arméniens ont été blessés.

Le lendemain ces mêmes Turcs ont envoyé dire à leurs confrères Arméniens que le soir à 11 heures à la Turque une attaque générale contre les marchands Arméniens aurait lieu, en même temps que la population Arménienne de la ville serait massacrée. Ces menaces ont été rapportées au Vali.

5. Les élèves de l'école Arménienne Tarkmantchatz de Sivas sont attaqués chaque soir, lors de leur retour au foyer, par des Turcs, qui les battent et les menacent d'outrages. Ces enfants rentrent souvent couverts de sang. Les élèves des autres écoles Arméniennes sont en butte aux mêmes mauvais traitements. D'autre part les femmes Arméniennes allant aux bains publics ou sortant pour affaires, sont presque toujours exposées aux propos libertins et aux mauvais traitements des Turcs.

Ces faits montrent la surexcitation des esprits, parmi les Musulmans à Sivas, surexcitation due à la politique du Gouvernement et arrivée à son paroxysme exposant à un danger continuel les Chrétiens de cette ville.

Extracts of a Report on the Incidents at Tokat, dated the 10*th March*, 1894, *sent viâ Sivas.*

Par un premier rapport, adressé au lendemain des faits, nous avions donné quelques renseignements sommaires sur l'attaque dont la population Turque de Tokat s'est rendue coupable envers les Arméniens le 7 du mois courant.

Voici des renseignements complémentaires à ce sujet, renseignements qui sont basés sur la plus stricte vérité, et qui à l'encontre des versions du Gouvernement local, tendant à présenter les faits sous la couleur d'un incident futil, prouvent surabondamment que cette attaque, conséquence de la recrudescence du fanatisme des Musulmans, était parfaitement préméditée et préparée.

On n'a sans doute pas oublié le premier incident de Tokat qui a eu lieu le 12 Mars, 1891 (v. s.). Lors de cet incident plus de mille personnes de la population Musulmane armées jusqu'aux dents s'étaient jetées sur les quartiers Arméniens et avaient commis toutes espèces de méfaits, tuant et blessant le pauvre monde, outrageant les femmes et saccageant les maisons. On était allé jusqu'à traîner dans les rues, lié à une corde, un blessé à demi-mort, et plusieurs autres ont subi la même torture.

Les auteurs de cette attaque tragique, qui pouvait aboutir à un massacre général et qui en avait toute l'apparence, quant à la manière dont les choses se sont passées, n'ont nullement été inquiétés. Aucun de ceux, chez lesquels des objets volés ont été saisis, n'a même été soumis à un simple interrogatoire. Les instigateurs de l'attaque ont vu leur conduite tacitement approuvée par le Gouvernement, tandis que les blessés Arméniens étaient emprisonnés pendant des semaines entières. Cette politique du Gouvernement local a encouragé la population Turque dans sa haine contre les Chrétiens, haine qui s'est manifestée presque chaque jour par différents incidents isolés, dont l'ensemble formait les phases d'un état de choses vraiment insupportable.

Les détails de ces incidents, dans lesquels le Gouvernement local a toujours eu une grande part d'action et de responsabilité, sont trop récents pour qu'il soit nécessaire de les énumérer de nouveau ici.

Pourtant, il est utile de rappeler la conduite du Capitaine Mirza Bey, qui criait journellement dans les rues qu'il fallait tuer les Arméniens, en les morcelant avec des scies, ainsi que le dicton fanatique, " La tête du giaour appartient au Gouvernement et accaparer ses biens est 'hélal' (légal) ! " qui était sans cesse publiquement répété non seulement par les gens du peuple, mais encore par les représentants de la force publique et par les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement.

Il est impossible de citer ici mot à mot toutes les injures proférées contre la religion Chrétienne. Les allusions les plus outrageantes sont faites aux choses sacrées et le Gouvernement ne punit jamais les coupables quand les faits lui sont rapportés.

En dehors des mauvais traitements auxquels les prêtres Arméniens, les élèves des écoles, et les femmes étaient exposés quand ils passaient dans les rues, tout dernièrement encore un Archimandrite Arménien, le Révérend Hovhan, desservant de l'une des églises Arméniennes de Tokat, a été très cruellement battu par un Turc, quand il retournait chez lui après avoir dit la messe ; ce Turc a aussi osé proférer contre Sa Gracieuse Majesté la Reine d'Angleterre de telles paroles outrageuses, que les répéter même serait un sacrilège.

Voilà un autre fait qui montre l'état d'esprit des Musulmans de Tokat envers les Chrétiens.

Le Révérend Père Chatron [?], Supérieur de la Mission de la Compagnie de Jésus à Tokat, s'était rendu, avec un membre de sa congrégation et quelques élèves dans les champs pour chercher des herbes médicales.

Un pâtre Turc, qui se trouvait sur la colline, au pied de laquelle ces ecclésiastiques herborisaient, a roulé plusieurs blocs sur leurs têtes. Les ecclésiastiques Français se sont mis à l'abri se réfugiant sous un rocher, mais le pâtre s'est approché d'eux et leur a lancé des pierres par la main. C'est en vain que le Révérend Père Chatron lui a fait observer qu'il était citoyen Français et qu'il pourrait faire châtier son agresseur. Le pâtre n'a attaché aucune importance à ces paroles; bien au contraire, il a proféré les plus graves insultes contre la nation Française et sa religion et a essayé de tuer les guiavours! Le Révérend Supérieur et ses compagnons ont dû fuir pour sauver leur vie. Ils ont été battu en chemin par d'autres Turcs encore, ce qui est la manifestation naturelle du fanatisme Musulman, arrivé ces jours derniers à son paroxysme.

Aux plaintes du Révérend Supérieur, le Gouvernement local a répondu, par malveillance contre les Arméniens, que les habitants du village Arménien de Buskundjuk pouvaient seul avoir commis cette agression; mais le Révérend Père Chatron a énergiquement déclaré que son agresseur n'était nullement un Arménien, et qu'il pourrait parfaitement le connaître s'il était confronté avec lui. Il a demandé une enquête sur les pâtres Turcs au service des propriétaires de troupeaux, aux environs de Tokat. Mais ces plaintes, ainsi que les démarches de l'honorable Consul de France de Sivas à ce sujet, n'ont donné jusqu'à présent aucun résultat.

Plusieurs autres incidents de même nature n'avaient laissé aucun doute sur la colère croissante des Musulmans contre les Chrétiens; et les Arméniens surtout, par suite de la méfiance même du Gouvernement, qui justifiait cette colère aux yeux des fanatiques, en subissaient les conséquences plus que les membres de toute autre communauté.

Ces faits se passaient, malgré la présence d'un Commandant Militaire et d'un Conseil de Guerre, et malgré l'augmentation du garnison de la ville et les visites très fréquentes de son Excellence Halil Bey, Vali de Sivas, qui n'ont rien fait pour maîtriser la recrudescence de fanatisme.

Depuis le commencement du mois de Ramazan, cette recrudescence avait pris un caractère tout à fait aigu; les Turcs disaient sans cesse que la dernière heure sonnerait très prochainement pour les guiavours. Et la réunion tenue la veille de l'attaque dans la mosquée de Tarkhadjilar sur l'invitation du Softa Mehdi Mudjeddide, qui depuis son arrivée à Tokat est choyé, honoré, et encouragé par les notabilités Musulmanes de Tokat, ne pouvait que précipiter les faits.

Les instructions données ce jour à la population Musulmane par le dit Mehdi, sont aujourd'hui parfaitement comprises par la conséquence qu'elles ont eue. Ce Mehdi criait journellement: "Tuons tous les guiavours, ceux du pays comme ceux de l'étranger, qui ne nous obéissent pas! Et ceux qui nous obéissent doivent être nos esclaves."

Voici à présent quelques détails supplémentaires sur l'attaque du 7 Mars (v. s.), détails qui sont l'expression de la plus stricte vérité.

Ce jour, à 4 heures à la Turque du matin, le cordonnier Mividjan Astardjian et le nommé Oskian Kasardjian, Leblebidji, marchandaient avec un Turc le prix d'un tapis que celui-ci voulait vendre. Le prix que les acheteurs ont offert a irrité le Turc, qui a commencé à proférer toutes sortes d'injures contre les acheteurs et la nation Arménienne; au même instant six soldats Turcs, qui s'y trouvaient, se sont jetés sur les Arméniens et les ont blessés avec leurs baïonnettes, en blasphémant, eux aussi, la religion Chrétienne et en invitant les Musulmans à leur coopérer.

L'agression qui a suivi ces vexations a été vraiment cruelle; des centaines de Bachi-Bozouks Turcs se sont rués sur les Arméniens, qui se trouvaient sans aucun moyen de défense; les Turcs criaient, "Attaquons-les! frappons-les! ce qui était décidé pour huit jours après, aura lieu aujourd'hui!"

En présence de cette agression les boutiquiers Arméniens des environs n'ont eu qu'une idée, celle de fermer leurs boutiques et de fuir. C'était d'autant plus sage de leur part, qu'en quittant le lieu d'agression, ils espéraient éviter des incidents plus graves.

Mais les Turcs devenaient de plus en plus farouches. Un Notable Musulman de Tokat, nommé Djelegh Oglou Mahoud Effendi, voyant les Arméniens fermer leurs boutiques, a crié, "Laissez-nous les clefs; ces boutiques et les marchandises y gardées nous appartiendront tôt ou tard!"

En même temps que cette attaque, d'autres incidents de même nature se produisaient sur tous les points de la ville.

Les Arméniens blessés se sont rendus, couverts de sang, au Palais du Gouvernement. Mais le Commissaire-en-chef de la Police n'a pas même voulu les écouter; il

les a congédiés en déclarant qu'ils devaient présenter des suppliques s'ils avaient des plaintes à formuler!

Sur cette conduite du Commissaire, les blessés et quelques femmes Arméniennes que les Turcs avaient menacés et battus, se sont rendus à l'Évêché, pour demander l'assistance de l'autorité ecclésiastique; d'autres Arméniens, affolés également par l'agression des Turcs, s'y sont réunis et l'Assistance a décidé de porter le danger, auquel les Arméniens se trouvaient exposés, à la connaissance de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et du Gouvernement Impérial, et d'adresser séance tenante un "takrir" à l'autorité locale, pour solliciter des mesures immédiates énergiques.

La précaution que l'autorité ecclésiastique a prise de renseigner le Gouvernement local du but de la réunion, l'envoi de la part du Gouvernement, du Commissaire-en-chef de la Police, et de l'Agent Mehmed Effendi, ont été précédemment rapportés.

Il est inutile aussi de revenir sur les détails de l'attaque des Musulmans sur l'Évêché. Le coup de pistolet tiré du fort et suivi de plusieurs autres dans la rue, l'attaque commise, de la part de milliers de Turcs, contre les Arméniens se trouvant devant l'Évêché, ont été également rapportés.

Pourtant nous devons insister sur le caractère de cette attaque, qui se produisant sur tous les points de la ville à la même heure, ne laissait aucun doute que c'était bien le massacre préparé de longue main que les Turcs voulaient mettre en exécution. Le meurtre du nommé Hadji Kévork Ghureghian, un vieillard âgé de 60 à 65 ans, qui se rendait à l'église pour faire les dévotions, a eu lieu dans des circonstances particulièrement dramatiques; ce pauvre vieillard a été immolé comme un mouton.

Le nombre des blessés excède trente, parmi lesquels plusieurs se trouvent dans un état alarmant. Ceux qui ont été battus et maltraités se chiffrent par des centaines.

Nous avons appris avec étonnement que le Commandant Militaire (qui d'ailleurs ne prononce le mot Arménien qu'en l'accompagnant d'affreux jurons) informé de la première attaque qui a eu lieu dans le bazar de Meidan, n'a rien fait pour protéger le peuple. On rapporte même que, dans la même journée, le Général de Division Moustafa Pacha, ayant rencontré le Commandant dans le vestibule de la mosquée d'Ali Pacha, lui a crié en face qu'une grande responsabilité lui incombait par suite de l'insouciance dont il avait fait preuve en n'envoyant pas la force armée sur les lieux pour prévenir que les faits prennent une si grande gravité. Plus tard, quand le Commandant Militaire est arrivé avec la force armée devant l'Évêché, au lieu de faire tout son possible pour disperser les agresseurs, il a, au contraire, crié aux agents de police, qu'il fallait laisser les Musulmans donner une leçon à ces cochons ("khenzir") d'Arméniens!

Les agents de police et les soldats n'étaient pas d'ailleurs animé de moins de férocité. Aussi l'agent de police, Sadik Effendi, a très gravement blessé avec sa baïonnette, et en présence d'un Notable Musulman, l'Arménien, Ovaguime Fénerdjian, qu'il a aussi battu avec la crosse de son fusil. L'Arménien, Mihran Djemberdjian, a reçu des blessures à la tête; l'examen médical a prouvé qu'il avait aussi reçu dans le dos plusieurs blessures, dues à des coups de baïonnette. D'autres Arméniens se trouvent dans le même cas.

Lors de l'attaque on a vu un soldat donner son fusil à un Bachi-Bozouk Turc pour l'employer contre les Arméniens. Les représentants de l'autorité n'ont compris la grande responsabilité qu'ils encouraient que quand ils ont vu le cadavre de Hadji Kévork Ghureghian, et le sang qui couvrait les habits de plusieurs blessés.

Il y a aussi à ajouter aux détails donnés par le précédent rapport qu'au lendemain de l'attaque on a vu le fameux Mehdi, tête nue, son couvre-chef en main, aller de marché en marché en criant, "Frères Musulmans! préparez vos canons! vos fusils! vos sabres! nous allons massacrer les guiavours, et si jamais il se trouve des Musulmans qui ne veuillent pas se conformer à cet ordre, nos sabres se tourneront contre eux!"

Le même jour l'agent, Sadik Effendi, s'est rendu à plusieurs reprises chez Hovaguime Fénerdjian, qu'il avait blessé la veille, et a demandé que le frère de celui-ci, nommé Aghadjan, lui soit livré.

Il déclarait qu'il le tuerait si jamais il passait entre ses mains. Il a voulu forcer la porte du domicile et en a menacé tous les habitants de mort en faisant ajuster les fusils de ses compagnons sur la maison. Le père de Hovaguime s'est adressé au Gouvernement demandant protection; mais là, on lui a déclaré que son fils Aghadjan était accusé d'avoir proféré des insultes contre Sadik et qu'il fallait le livrer au Gouvernement.

Deux jeunes Arméniens nommés Topalian et Varteressian, étant obligés de sortir

ce même jour pour affaires, avaient cru prudent de s'armer pour se défendre en cas d'agression. Les Turques se sont rués sur eux quand ils traversaient le bazar de Meidan, et après avoir désarmé battu, et blessé ces pauvres jeunes hommes, les ont amenés, couverts de sang, au Palais du Gouvernement, qui maintient jusqu'à présent leur arrestation.

Dans la soirée du 9 Mars (v. s.), des Bachi-Bozouks Turcs, armés, ont assiégé l'Église des Jésuites, et ont voulu forcer la porte, et ont menacé de tuer le Père Supérieur, qui par des connaissances médicales et par son dévoûment avait mérité, lors du choléra de l'année passée, la reconnaissance de toute la population Chrétienne et Musulman.

Le Gouvernement a obligé plusieurs marchands d'ouvrir leurs boutiques et de vaquer à leurs affaires; une quinzaine de boutiques ont été ouvertes ainsi, mais des hordes de Turcs armés, ayant assiégé ces boutiques, leurs propriétaires ont dû les fermer à la hâte et de se refugier dans leurs maisons. Un Grec a été même très cruellement battu.

Son Excellence Halil Bey, Vali de Sivas, le Gouverneur de Tokat, le Commandant Militaire, et les membres du Conseil de Guerre, tâchent d'induire en erreur le Gouvernement Impérial sur le caractère de ces incidents par les télégrammes qu'ils adressent. L'insécurité est complète, et le danger d'un massacre imminent des Arméniens, plus menaçant que jamais.

Tokat, le 18 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

L'insécurité continue. L'engagement que son Excellence Halil Bey, Vali de Sivas, avait pris sur les démarches de l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne, de faire ramasser les armes des Turcs, n'a pas été exécuté. Le Vali s'est contenté d'annoncer à la population qu'il était défendu de porter des armes. Mais cela n'a eu d'autre effet que d'obliger la population Turque de cacher leurs armes pour les soustraire à toute recherche éventuelle.

D'une vingtaine de Turcs qui ont été dernièrement emprisonnés plusieurs sont déjà relâchés. Le Gouvernement n'a encore rien fait pour arrêter les meurtriers de Hadji Kévork Kuregian.

Les blessés Arméniens, même ceux qui n'ont pas la force de marcher, sont obligés de se rendre au Palais du Gouvernement pour faire leurs dépositions. Ce procédé a pour but de prouver aux Consuls étrangers siégeant à Sivas, que les blessures sont insignifiantes et que l'attaque n'a pas eu une grande importance.

Le Gouvernement a envoyé dans des casernes les soldats qui habitaient sous une tente, près du fort, et qui doivent avoir donné le signal de l'attaque, en tirant un coup de pistolet. Cette mesure seule suffit pour faire ressortir les responsabilités dans cette affaire.

Dans les campagnes la même insécurité continue. Les voyageurs sont arrêtés et dépouillés. Les paysans craignent des attaques.

Le Sieur Sahak, instituteur attaché à l'École de Touz-Hissar, a été arrêté nuitamment et amené à Kotch-Hissar. Il n'est accusé que de n'avoir pu donner des renseignements sur un suspect, qu'il déclare, d'ailleurs, ne pas même avoir vu.

Il appert d'un autre rapport arrivé de Tokat que Hadji Kévork Gureghian a été tué par des bouchers Turcs, qui l'ont mis à mort en proférant le mot "Bismillah" (au nom de Dieu), comme il est d'usage chez les Musulmans d'immoler les sacrifices.

L'agonie du pauvre vieillard a été des plus terribles; la vue de son cadavre, couvert de sang, présentait la protestation la plus éloquente contre le fanatisme auquel il a été victime.

Le Gouvernement a voulu, en usant de pression, obtenir du médecin de la Municipalité un rapport déclarant que la mort provenait d'une blessure d'arme à feu, mais la chose était tellement manifeste que, ni le médecin de la Municipalité, ni un autre médecin qui a également examiné le cadavre, n'ont osé libeller un rapport dans ce sens. Ils ont déclaré au contraire que la blessure provenait d'arme blanche.

No. 104.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 27.)

(No. 153. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 27, 1895, 12·45 P.M.

M. Russian and French colleagues consider that the reform proposals should in the first instance be presented unofficially to the Sultan, but I think that they will agree that an identic Memorandum insisting on their adoption should accompany them. We should then communicate them to the Porte and to our colleagues. The French Government have accepted our scheme of reforms.

No. 105.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 27.)

(No. 154.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 27, 1895, 3 P.M.

THE following joint telegram has been received by the three Embassies from the Consuls at Erzeroum:—

"We think it our duty to point out to your Excellencies the necessity of asking the Porte to order the Bitlis Commission to proceed to Gheliegnzan without delay in order to make the necessary investigations there.

"We have taken this action in view of persistent rumours here, from semi-official and other sources, of the removal of bodies buried at Gheliegnzan, a large number of which are said to have been taken away by the authorities before the winter.

"We have also in view the French Delegate's telegram of the 26th March sent with the approval of his colleagues and communicated to the French Ambassador on the 27th March, according to which our Delegates think that a visit to Gheliegnzan would be desirable as soon as possible."

The following identic telegram was sent by my colleagues and myself direct to the Delegates at Moush:—

"In concert with your colleagues, who are receiving similar instructions, you should propose to the Commission an immediate excursion to Gheliegnzan in order to ascertain the condition of the village at the end of the winter. If need be, you should insist on the necessity of your proposal being acceded to.

"Sent to Erzeroum."

We have informed the Porte of the dispatch of these instructions.

No. 106.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received April* 27.)

(No. 155.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 27, 1895, *midnight.*

MUNIR PASHA was sent to me yesterday by the Sultan, who appears to be seriously alarmed at Reuter's telegram respecting Armenian rising, and also at the announcement of the approaching public meeting in London.

His Majesty appealed to me for my advice and assistance.

I could do nothing more than advise His Majesty to bring the Armenian question to a conclusion as soon as possible.

On Munir Pasha's calling again to-day to press, with reference to this advice, for particulars of our reform proposals, I excused myself on the grounds that my instructions were not sufficient to enable me to enter into details.

I am advised that the moment is specially favourable for the presentation of our reform proposals and that our success is likely to be made more difficult by delay.

The Reform Commission at the Porte continues its sittings, but is universally discredited.

The Russians have let the Porte know that their Government has accepted our reform scheme.

No. 107.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 28.)

(No. 156.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April 28, 1895, 10 A.M.*

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van telegraphed to me yesterday that Boghos, the Headman of the village of Boghashessen, had died in prison at Van on the 19th instant, and that his body was delivered to the Bishop and placed in a church. Owing to information which his widow supplied to him, he and an American doctor had proceeded to the church and examined the body. The apparent cause of death they found to be an injury to the right testicle, which was completely crushed.

A few days before the Kurdish prisoners had attacked the Armenian prisoners, and had badly wounded one of them. Considerable fears are entertained for the safety of the other prisoners, and Mr. Hallward says he cannot but consider these fears well founded.

I telegraphed in reply to Mr. Hallward that the Grand Vizier had sent telegraphic orders yesterday evening to the Vali to take measures for the protection of the prisoners, and to have the body of Boghos medically examined.

I told Mr. Hallward, in case he had not already done so, to communicate particulars to the Vali, with whom, I added, he should, so far as possible, keep in touch.

No. 108.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 251.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 22, 1895.*

IN reply to your Lordship's despatch No. 145 of the 9th instant on the subject of the alleged imprisonment and ill-treatment at Janina of an Armenian lawyer of Aleppo, named Aghop Remzi Ghazarian, as reported by Mr. Vice-Consul Blakeney, I have the honour to inform you that I have caused inquiries to be made of Mr. Barnham, of the Patriarchate, and of Artin Pasha, and I shall not fail to communicate to your Lordship any information which I may obtain on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 109.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 258.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 24, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the conversion to Islamism of a Kerassond girl.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 109.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, April 11, 1895.*

ON the 29th ultimo I received a telegram from a Greek Ottoman subject at Kerassond, named Ilia Koumas, informing me that the Turkish authorities having, during his absence, connived at making his daughter a Mahommedan, were forcing her to remain so, and marry a Moslem.

I have now to report that, on the orders of the Vali, the girl was once more called

before the Kerassond Administrative Council, and in the presence of her parents, as well as the Bishop's representative, she freely selected Mahommedanism. The incident thus closed without any disturbance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 110.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 260.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 25, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith two despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting disturbances which have occurred in the districts of Sidon and Latakia.

I am bringing the matter to the notice of the Porte, and will urge them to take energetic measures to stop all attempts to disturb the public peace.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 110.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, April 10, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose extracts of two despatches received from the Vice-Consuls at Sidon and Latakia, relating to the disturbed state of their respective districts, and to inform your Excellency that I have made representations to the Governor-General of Beyrout, urging him to adopt decisive measures lest the agitation should assume a graver form.

His Excellency informed me, with regard to affairs at Sidon, that the Kaimakam of that place had been ordered to proceed to Nabétieh, and, after due investigation, to arrest and punish the ringleaders.

His Excellency had not received any previous intimation of the occurrences at Latakia, and I therefore, at his request, handed him a Memorandum on the subject, and he gave me assurances that the matter would receive his immediate attention.

Under present circumstances, and in view of the existing agitation amongst Mussulmans, I think that the Vali's hands would be considerably strengthened if he received instructions from the Sublime Porte to repress with severity any attempt to disturb the public peace in the vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 110.

Vice-Consul Abéla to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

Sir, *Sidon, April 3, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to inform you of some recent disturbances in the district of the Shukif, a division of the Kaïkaïnysh of Sidon. At Nabétieh, the seat of that district, certain Metevali entered, a month ago, the house of the priest (Greek Catholic) by night, and beat and robbed him; some of the culprits were caught and temporarily imprisoned.

Later, a mob of forty or fifty children and youths went to the Christian quarter, and proceeded to curse and threaten that they would do to them as had been done to the Christians of Armenia. Whereupon the Christians were frightened, and declared to the Mudir their intention to flee the district. The Mudir then arrested the boys for a few hours, and struck some of them and let them go.

On Saturday evening the 30th March, while some Metwali of the large village of Durveir, were trespassing upon the crops and forests of the neighbouring Christian hamlet of Shelbaal, the watchman of the latter warned them off, and they fell upon him and beat him. That night also a large company of the Metwali of that village attacked the said hamlet, smashed the doors, wounded six men (the priest among them) and three women, and carried off a large number of goats with other plunder.

The Christians fled, and a part of them complained to the Governor of Sidon, who sent the proper officers, and after due investigation twelve of the attacking party were brought to prison; but the night just past six of the Metwali came armed to the hamlet in question and uttered fresh threats because the Christians had complained.

As a result the Christian population of that district is in a state of terror.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SHIBLY ABELA, M.D.

Inclosure 3 in No. 110.

Vice-Consul Vitalé to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

(Extrait.) *Lattaquié, le 5 Avril*, 1895.

J'AI l'honneur de vous soumettre sous ce pli une Pétition que les Chrétiens de quelques villages du Caïmacamlic de Sahioum (Liva de Lattaquié) m'avaient présentée.

Par cette Pétition vous relèverez, M. le Consul-Général, que ces Chrétiens se plaignent de la manière dont ils sont traités par le nouveau Caïmacam de Sahioum, les officiers des Redifs, et quelques employés des autorités, en ajoutant que s'ils venaient à être traités de cette manière, ils ne pourront guère rester dans leurs villages, qui sont entourés par les Ansaryehs, soi-disant, nouvellement convertis à l'Islamisme.

Dans cette même Pétition les Chrétiens font mention du cas d'une femme qu'on voulait convertir par force à la religion Musulmane et pour lequel une querelle a eu lieu entre Musulmans et Chrétiens. Cette femme fut d'ailleurs amenée à Lattaquié où elle déclara n'avoir nullement l'intention de changer de religion et elle fut rendue à ses parents.

Il paraît qu'à l'arrivée du nouveau Caïmacam les Musulmans de Sahioum et les Ansaryéhs ont remis cette question sur le tapis et il en est résulté la molestation des Chrétiens villageois.

En portant ce qui précède à votre haute connaissance je crois devoir vous soumettre, M. le Consul-Général, que d'après l'inspiration de mon expérience en ce pays où j'ai l'honneur d'être Vice-Consul depuis bientôt vingt-cinq ans, j'ai lieu de craindre que ces molestations des Chrétiens pourraient prendre des proportions et devenir des persécutions sur les Chrétiens parsemés dans les villages de ce liva sinon dans la même de Lattaquié.

Malheur au Chrétien qui tombe entre les mains des fonctionnaires, car il le font souffrir jusqu'à ce qu'il achète tous et chacun séparément. Il n'en est pas ainsi des Musulmans qui, coûte que coûte, ont toujours raison et qui sont toujours favorisés.

Je puis citer plusieurs cas de ce genre qui ont eu lieu dernièrement dans cette ville et ses dépendances; mais je ne veux pas être plus long pour ne pas vous importuner davantage.

Inclosure 4 in No. 110.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Beyrout, April 12, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 10th instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith a further report from Vice-Consul Abela of Sidon relating to the disturbances in his district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 110*.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 36 A.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April* 28, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 155 of the 27th instant relative to the question of the reforms to be introduced in the Armenian provinces of Asiatic Turkey.

Her Majesty's Government are considering the reform scheme drawn up by you and your French and Russian colleagues, and I hope to be able to announce their decision very shortly.

The general conception of the scheme seems good, but it will be subjected to severe criticism in this country on the ground that, unless the appointment of Valis is made subject to the consent of the Powers, no reform can be effective.

Failing the appointment of a Governor-General, it might be stipulated that the appointment of the High Commissioner should be subject to the approval of the Powers, and should be for a fixed term of some duration. These amendments might go some way towards satisfying public opinion in this country.

Inclosure 5 in No. 110.

Vice-Consul Abela to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

Sir, *Sidon, April* 11, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to report to you the recent events that have followed those reported in my despatch of the 3rd instant.

On the night of Wednesday, the 3rd instant, the Metwalis of Nusar, in the district of Shukif, attacked the houses of the few Christian residents there with stones, and attempted to break in the doors and frightened them, so that during that night the latter all fled to the two Christian villages of Kalaât Meis and Kotariych. On the night of Friday, the 5th instant, the same parties from Nusar attacked Kalaât Meis, and with firing and threats made them flee into the woods.

A few days previously the Metwalis of Zurciyrieh had turned their cattle loose in the grain fields of the Christians of Kalaât Meis.

During this week, in the lands of Rikei, a Christian was warding off from his crops the cattle from the neighbouring Metwali village of Izzeh when their owners fell upon him, wounded, and left him helpless. This case has been submitted to the Government of Sidon.

During this week, also, four Bedouins came to the Metwali village of Kefr-Zibnit and exchanged shots with the inhabitants, killing one and wounding another; one of the Bedouins was caught, and the case has also been submitted at Sidon.

At the village of Shalhaal, mentioned in my previous despatch, the retainers of the Metwali Bey, Dervish El-Hussein, created a second panic by chasing thither some loose horses with firing of guns. A zaptieh being on hand, caught and delivered the horses to the owners.

The Kaimakam of Sidon called for the leading men of the Metwali in this district, and demanded guarantees from them that there should be no recurrence of these disturbances, but they have not yet consented to give such guarantees.

I have, &c.
(Signed) SHIBLY ABELA.

No. 111.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 29.)

(No. 156 A.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 29, 1895, 5·50 P.M.

THE following is in reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 36 A of the 28th instant :—

I did my utmost, in a long conversation which I had with my colleagues, to induce them to agree to the modifications which your Lordship suggested.

Their objection in regard to the Valis are insurmountable. It was only after long debate that the wording of the second Article of the Memorandum was adopted, and they did not agree to its being strengthened.

They would not oppose the insertion in the fourth paragraph of Article 7 of the Memorandum of the following words in regard to the High Commissioner: "et dont le choix serait approuvé par les Puissances," on the understanding that their respective Governments are prepared to adopt your Lordship's suggestion in regard to the matter. However, they consider that any such additions will make it very difficult to obtain the Sultan's acceptance without exerting more pressure than they would wish.

I understand that Prince Lobanoff is lukewarm in regard to the proposals, and somewhat disposed to think that the Russian Ambassador has gone too far, and that the French Government in authorizing them expressed their opinion that they were somewhat excessive.

In view of the state of affairs here, my colleagues lay great stress on the importance of presenting the proposals without delay, and all our friends counsel promptitude.

No. 112.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 165.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 29, 1895.

I HAVE received and laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 228 of the 10th instant, reporting your audience with the Sultan on the 5th instant, when His Majesty spoke of the intended Turkish Commission of Inquiry into Armenian affairs, and discussed generally the condition of his Armenian subjects and the question of reforms.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the language employed by your Excellency on this occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 113.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 167.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 29, 1895.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 232 of the 17th instant, reporting the steps taken by your Excellency at the Porte with a view to checking the violent and oppressive conduct of the Turkish officials in the country districts of the Armenian provinces, and I approve your Excellency's proceedings in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 114.

Foreign Office to Colonial Office.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, April* 29, 1895.

I AM directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo* on the subject of alleged Armenian revolutionary movements, in which he mentions a report that the villagers of Kessab, in the Suedia plain, profess to have agents in Cyprus who have promised to supply them with arms and ammunition.

Lord Kimberley will be glad if the Marquess of Ripon will cause this information to be communicated to the High Commissioner of Cyprus, with a view to inquiry being made into the truth of this rumour.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 115.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 30.)

(No. 157.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 30, 1895, 1·50 P.M.

IN continuation of my telegram No. 59 of 16th February, I have to inform your Lordship that the Court of Cassation has now received the papers referring to the Armenian prisoners.

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* Inclosure in No. 81*.

No. 116.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 30.)

(No. 158.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 30, 1895, 2 P.M.

REFERRING to my telegram No. 120 of 2nd April, I have the honour to inform your Lordship of the arrival here of seven more Armenian ecclesiastics, including the Bishop of Fernooz.

No. 117.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received April 30.)

(No. 159.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, April* 30, 1895, 12·5 A.M.

I HAVE just been informed by the Sultan that he has received a Report from his Commission of Reforms, and that he has decided to adopt their recommendations. His Imperial Majesty hopes that this decision will be acceptable to Her Majesty's Government. The Report recommends the appointment of Christian assistants to the Governors and of a certain number of Christian Kaimakams and Mudirs not only in the provinces inhabited by Armenians but throughout Asia Minor, the admission of some Christians to the Gendarmerie, and the appointment of a permanent Commission at the Porte to superintend the execution of these reforms.

His Majesty's object is, of course, to take the wind out of our sails, and I therefore, in reply, only expressed the hope that his decision would facilitate the execution of the proposals which we were about to lay before him.

No. 118.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 36 A.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April* 30, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 155 of the 27th instant relative to the question of the reforms to be introduced in the Armenian provinces of Asiatic Turkey.

Her Majesty's Government are considering the reform scheme drawn up by you and your French and Russian colleagues, and I hope to be able to announce their decision very shortly.

The general conception of the scheme seems good, but it will be subjected to severe criticism in this country on the ground that, unless the appointment of Valis is made subject to the consent of the Powers, no reform can be effective.

Failing the appointment of a Governor-General, it might be stipulated that the appointment of the High Commissioner should be subject to the approval of the Powers, and should be for a fixed term of some duration. These amendments might go some way towards satisfying public opinion in this country.

No. 119.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 37.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, April* 30, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 240 and telegrams Nos. 147, 151, and 154 of the 20th, 23rd, 25th, and 27th instant respectively relative to the unsatisfactory proceedings of the Sassoon Commission of Inquiry.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the instructions on the subject which have been sent to the European Delegates at Moush.

It seems doubtful whether at this stage it would be judicious to threaten the Porte with the withdrawal of the Delegates. But it might do some good if a joint intimation were made to the effect that the reports, when published, will reveal any shortcomings and want of impartiality on the part of the Turkish Commissioners.

No. 120.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 1.)

(No. 160.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 1, 1895, 12·3 P.M.*

I HAVE to-day telegraphed to Mr. Graves and Mr. Shipley that the Sultan has given orders for the Commission to finish up the examination on which they are at present engaged as quickly as possible, in order that they may reach Gholié-Guzan before the end of the week. In the event of the departure being delayed beyond that date, the Delegates are to inform the Commissioners that they will start off independently.

No. 121.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 169.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 1, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 154 of the 27th ultimo with regard to the necessity for the immediate presence of the Commission of Inquiry at Gholié-Guzan in view of the reported efforts of the local authorities there to remove all traces of the alleged massacres.

I approve the identic instructions on the subject sent by your Excellency and your French and Russian colleagues to the European Delegates at Moosh.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 122.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 170.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 1, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 156 of the 28th ultimo, reporting the death under suspicious circumstances of an Armenian prisoner in gaol at Bogaz-Kessen, and the fears that are entertained for the safety of the other prisoners there.

I have learnt with satisfaction the instructions on the subject sent by the Grand Vizier to the Vali in consequence of your representations, and I have to express my approval of your Excellency's action in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 123.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 161.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 2, 1895, 9·15 A.M.*

MR. GRAVES telegraphed to me yesterday as follows:—

"With reference to my despatch No. 48 of the 8th ultimo, following identical telegram with my French and Russian colleagues here.

"We submit the following telegram to your Excellencies which we have received from our Delegates, asking for instructions as to the attitude to be taken by them under the circumstances:—

"'Hebo, of Sheuik, was summoned by us to-day, the 29th April, and deposed that the Chief of Gendarmerie yesterday threatened him with death if he accused the soldiers instead of the Kurds of killing the Armenians; that, by means of Nadir Aga and the Mufti acting as interpreters, he received a similar recommendation from the Mutessarif in the presence of a Pasha and of the Secretary of the Commission.

"'Further promises were made by the Mutessarif that he would give him 1,000 piastres, 10 oxen, and 500 sheep, reconstruct his house and his village, making him Headman of the latter, and restore the £T. 360 taken from his brother, on condition that he would acknowledge that he had seen Mourad, whose revolutionary counsels had been followed by the Armenians, that he would attribute the burning of the villages to the Kurds, declare that Mourad and his band had fought with the troops at Gholié-Guzan, and, finally, that he would refuse to reply when questioned about the massacre of the women in the church, or about the priest of Semal.

"'We have received the promise of the President of the Commission that an inquiry shall be held.

"'We are justified in considering that there is good foundation for these grave accusations, both from information in our possession, and from the way in which the inquiry is being conducted.'"

No. 124.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 2.)

(No. 162.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 2, 1895, 9·30 A.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram to your Lordship No. 161 of to-day, I have telegraphed the following reply to Mr. Graves:—

"Tell Mr. Shipley he is to insist on the inquiry being held immediately, with the assistance of the Delegates, and in their presence."

No. 125.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 178.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 2, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegrams Nos. 161 and 162 of to-day, reporting an alleged attempt on the part of the local authorities at Moush to intimidate the Armenian witness, Hebo, and the instructions sent by your Excellency to the British Delegate in consequence.

I approve your having directed Mr. Shipley to insist upon an immediate inquiry being held into this matter by the Commission, with the necessary safeguards.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 126.

The Earl of Kimberley to Mr. Howard.

(No. 217 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 2, 1895.*

THE French Ambassador inquired of me to-day what decision had been arrived at by Her Majesty's Government on the project of reforms for the Armenian provinces which had been drawn up by the three Ambassadors at Constantinople.

I told his Excellency that we were generally favourable to it, but that there were certain points upon which we thought that it required strengthening. I was about to instruct Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to communicate on these points with his French and Russian colleagues, and I would also send you a despatch giving a detailed explanation of our views in regard to them.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 127.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 3.)

(No. 163.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 3, 1895, 11·15 A.M.

YESTERDAY Mr. Shipley sent me the following telegram:—

"The accusations of Hebo have been declared by the Commission to be without foundation on the strength of written answers from the Military Pasha and the Mutessarif, together with a verbal denial of the Clerk of the Commission and of the Mufti, without having examined either the Chief of the Gendarmerie or the Nadir Agha, and without confrontation.

"We only signed the *procès-verbal* as being present, declaring ourselves unable to agree with this opinion."

No. 128.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 3.)

(No. 164.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 3, 1895, 10 P.M.

MY colleagues regret that they cannot support the stipulations proposed in your Lordship's telegram No. 38 of the 3rd May, for the following reasons:—

1. They consider that these modifications would render it more difficult to obtain the Sultan's consent.

2. They consider that, as regards the Valis, it is impossible for the Embassies to judge of qualifications of Valis, except in case of notorious unfitness, when the Memorandum already gives us the right to object. Moreover, the right of approving their appointment would diminish our power of criticizing their acts.

3. They consider that the President of the Commission stands in a different category from the High Commissioner, the Commission being a permanent institution sitting at Constantinople, and that it would be practically useless to reserve the right of approving the President; and the same arguments in regard to criticism used in the preceding paragraph applies equally to the President.

4. My colleagues are unwilling to fix a term of duration of the High Commissioner's appointment, as they consider that it would weaken rather than strengthen his authority. It would also serve the Turks as a pretext for delay.

The case of the Lebanon stands, in the opinion of the Ambassadors, on a footing totally different from that of the Armenian provinces. As regards the approval by the Powers of the High Commissioners, it will be necessary to communicate directly with St. Petersburgh and Paris.

No. 129.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 38.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May* 3, 1895.

THE scheme of reforms for the eastern provinces of Asia Minor, which was forwarded in your despatch No. 213 of the 18th ultimo, has been carefully considered by Her Majesty's Government.

They cannot but feel apprehension that the proposed guarantees for the execution of the reforms and for just administration in the future will, in practice, be found inadequate.

They understand from your telegram No. 156 A of the 29th ultimo that your French and Russian colleagues are willing, subject to the approval of their Governments, to agree that the selection of the High Commissioner shall be approved by the Powers, and they gladly accept this additional stipulation.

They consider it important that in the case of the President of the Permanent Commission of Control a similar provision should be introduced, and they also think that the High Commissioner should be appointed for a minimum term, and that the appointments of the Valis should be subject to the consent of the Powers. A precedent for these two last conditions may be found in the arrangements for the government of the Lebanon.

No. 130*.

The Earl of Kimberley to Mr. Howard.

(No. 49.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 4, 1895.*

I HAVE repeated to you Sir P. Currie's telegram No. 164 of yesterday, giving the opinion of his French and Russian colleagues on the modifications which Her Majesty's Government desire to see introduced into the scheme of reforms for the provinces inhabited by Armenians.

Her Majesty's Government have learnt with great regret that these modifications have not been adopted. In their opinion they would have afforded valuable security for the efficient application and good working of the reforms. In view, however, of the importance which they attach to action being taken immediately, and to unanimity being maintained among the Powers, Her Majesty's Government are prepared to waive their proposals. But they trust that authority will be given to the French and Russian Ambassadors to insert in the scheme the proviso that the selection of the High Commissioner who is to supervise the execution of the reforms shall be approved by the Powers. Both Ambassadors have already expressed their personal assent to such a proviso.

As soon as Her Majesty's Government are informed that this addition has been agreed to they will authorize Sir P. Currie to concert with his French and Russian colleagues for the presentation of the scheme to the Sultan and the Turkish Government.

* Also to Sir F. Lascelles (No. 75).

Her Majesty's Government earnestly hope that your Excellency may be able to persuade the French and Russian Ambassadors to agree to these proposals. They trust to have an early report from you of the result of your deliberations. They attach the greatest value to unanimity on the part of the three Powers, and are fully alive to the advantage of speedy action.

No. 130.

*The Earl of Kimberley to Mr. Howard.**†

(No. 218.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 3, 1895.*

I TRANSMIT herewith copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,‡ inclosing a Memorandum and project of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Turkey which have been drawn up under the directions of his French and Russian colleagues and himself, and approved by them after discussion.

In a second despatch, of which copy is also inclosed,§ Sir P. Currie offers some explanations of these projects, and comments upon them.

Her Majesty's Government have given these papers their attentive consideration. They understand that the Governments of France and Russia have already expressed approval of them. In the general purport and tendency of the proposals Her Majesty's Government equally concur, but they cannot help feeling apprehensive that in practice the guarantees which are provided for the carrying out of the reforms, and for securing just administration in the future, may be found inadequate.

In reply to a message which I sent some days ago to Sir P. Currie upon this point, his Excellency reported that, after further discussion with his colleagues, they had expressed their willingness, subject to the approval of their Governments, to insert a further stipulation that the selection of the High Commissioner, who is to be charged with the supervision of the reforms, shall be approved by the Powers. This, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, would be a material improvement of the scheme, and they gladly give their assent to it. They consider that it would be of great importance that a similar provision should be inserted with regard to the selection of the President of the Permanent Commission of Control which it is proposed to establish at Constantinople, and with regard to the appointments of the Valis. It appears to them further that it would be advantageous that the appointment of the High Commissioner, which in the project is of indefinite duration, should be made for a minimum term of years, which might be exceeded if circumstances seemed to render it advisable. For the general principle of these provisions a precedent would be found in the plan framed for the Lebanon, though the details of those arrangements need not be closely followed.

Sir P. Currie has been instructed to discuss these proposals with his colleagues, and Her Majesty's Government trust that he may be able to induce them to give their adhesion to them. Her Majesty's Government are, however, aware that the three Ambassadors consider it important to proceed without delay in laying the scheme before the Sultan and the Porte, and his Excellency has been instructed to report promptly the result of his discussions.

I should wish you to mention the proposals to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs. Her Majesty's Government hope that they may be favourably received by the French and Russian Representatives, but they think it desirable to acquaint the two Governments of the view they take. You may assure his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government attach the greatest value to unanimity on the part of the three Powers, and you may state that on this account, and in view of the expediency of speedy action, I have refrained from bringing forward some other suggestions on less material points which Her Majesty's Government would otherwise have wished to discuss.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

* Also to Sir F. Lascelles (No. 132).
† Substance telegraphed.
‡ No. 86.
§ No. 86.

No. 131.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 165.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 4, 1895, 11·45 A.M.*

HAVING heard from the Delegates that the Commission had declined to start for Ghelié-Guzan before Wednesday, we telegraphed the following instructions yesterday:—

"The Sultan has informed us that the delay until Wednesday was ordered so that the Commission could be accompanied to Ghelié-Guzan by the Colonel, who is expected at Moush.

"We attach great importance to serious inquiry into the intimidation of Hebo being held in your presence before your departure, but the Delegates should use their own discretion as to whether they should wait for the Colonel or not.

"Repeated to Erzeroum."

No. 132.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 166. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 4, 1895, 11·40 A.M.*

I RECEIVED last night a second visit from Munir Bey, who had been sent by the Sultan with messages on the subject of the meeting to take place on the 7th May.

On his inquiring whether I expected that attacks would be made on the Mahommedan religion and Caliphate, I assured him to the contrary, adding that, although the conduct of his Government with regard to the Armenians would doubtless be severely criticized, yet I did not believe that the Sultan would be attacked personally.

I understood from Munir Bey that His Majesty had almost decided to adopt the course suggested by me, and formally inform Her Majesty's Government that he has made up his mind to follow the advice of the three Powers on the question of reforms before the meeting takes place.

The French Ambassador has obtained and sent to his Delegate a plan, supposed to have been drawn up by Armenians who have now taken refuge in England, which shows the position of the three trenches at Ghelié-Guzan.

In the event of the trenches being discovered, there are already signs that the Turks will maintain that any human remains which they may be found to contain are those of people who were killed in a struggle between Armenians and Kurds.

No. 133.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 167.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 4, 1895, 10:50 A.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 156 of the 28th April, I have received the following from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van:—

"Your Excellency's telegram of the 28th April.

"Vali attributes external injury to Armenians, who wanted to make a case against the Government, and he showed me an official medical certificate, stating that the man died of disease of the kidneys.

"This does not seem to me at all probable, but I cannot positively prove the contrary."

The girl whom I mentioned in my telegram to your Excellency of the 25th April was brought to Van, lodged in the house of a Turk, and next day declared formally that she had adopted the Mussulman faith.

No. 134.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 4.)

(No. 168.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 4, 1895, 12·15 P.M.*

I HAVE received the following telegram from Mr. Graves:—

"Eleven Armenian Notables imprisoned at Bitlis are reported by Mr. Shipley to have been released, it is said by Iradé.

"It is also expected that in a few days other prisoners will be released, but their names are not given."

No. 135.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.— (Received May 5.)

(No. 170.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 5, 1895.*

WE have received the following identic telegram from the Delegates:—

"Believing it to be of the utmost importance to visit Ghelié-Guzan before the arrival of Colonel Tewfik Pasha, whose presence there might seriously interfere with the *bona fides* of the investigation, and availing ourselves of the latitude allowed us by your Excellencies, we are starting to-day alone.

"Even when directly interrogated on the point, the Commission have always concealed from us the fact that this officer was to accompany them.

"The President has assured us that Hebo will remain at our disposal."

No. 136.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 262.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 24, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 120 of the 16th February last, on the subject of the riots which took place at Yozgat on the 18th January, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a Notice which has been received from the Sublime Porte, giving the information furnished in the matter by the Governor-General of the Vilayet of Angora.

His Excellency states that four theological students and several children were arrested, but no charge being made against them, and in the absence of all proof and means of identification, the case was dismissed.

The children were released, but the students were kept in prison for twenty-seven days, and only released on bail.

I have sent the Notice to Her Majesty's Consul at Angora for his observations.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 136.

Notice.

LE Gouverneur-Général du Vilayet d'Angora, interpellé sur l'incident survenu à Yozgat le 18 Janvier, 1895, fait savoir que quatre étudiants en théologie et quelques enfants avaient été arrêtés et livrés au Tribunal Correctionnel de la localité, mais que néanmoins, la femme Grecque qui avait porté plainte et les habitants du quartier qui avaient été interrogés à cet effet, n'ont pu reconnaître ni désigner les agresseurs. Les dits habitants ayant, en outre, déclaré qu'ils n'avaient aucune plainte à formuler de ce chef, une ordonnance de non-lieu a été rendue faute de preuves en faveur des prévenus.

Les enfants arrêtés furent relâchés.

Quant aux étudiants en théologie les autorités Impériales les ont détenus préventivement encore vingt-sept jours, et ne les ont relaxés que sous caution.

Le 17 Avril, 1895.

No. 137.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 6.)

(No. 263.)

Constantinople, April 27, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond reporting the release of eight Armenian prisoners at Trebizond.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 137.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 13, 1895.

Sir,

IN my interview with the Vali yesterday, I requested his Excellency to examine in person the accusations against the political prisoners at Trebizond, and to set, if possible, at liberty for Easter such of them as he thought were awaiting trial on mere paltry and insignificant charges.

I have now the honour to report that Cadri Bey has this day released eight of the suspects, six of which are from Charshamba. As all were arrested after the 31st March, none appear in Table II of my despatch No. 45. Details are reserved for a Return to be sent at the end of this month, but I may state here all the same that the political prisoners still awaiting trial in this vilayet number seven at Trebizond, and six, or rather two, at Samsoon.

The arrests of most of those hitherto released were effected by Mussa Pasha, the disreputable Kaimakam of Charshamba, who continues to be protected by friends at Yildiz, while the delay in the trials of the remaining prisoners here is due, I am told, to the irregularities of Hikmet Bey, the Sub-Imperial Procureur at Samsoon, who, through negligence, if not corruption, transmitted in parts only the necessary papers for the prosecution. Cadri Bey has asked the Porte's permission to dismiss Hikmet Bey. His representations, it is to be hoped, will not be ignored, as those have been against Mussa Pasha.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 138.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 6.)

(No. 264.)

Constantinople, April 27, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 226 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, inclosing translations of reports upon the Tokat disturbances.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 138.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 16, 1895.

Sir,

IN connection with my despatch of the 3rd instant relative to last month's disturbance at Tokat, I have the honour to inclose herewith copies, in duplicate, of three documents this day received by me from Dr. Jewett at Sivas.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 138.

Translation of the Vali's Report on the Tokat Disturbance of March 19, 1895.

HIS Excellency the Governor-General, immediately after his arrival at Tokat (23rd March), as there were no Armenian leaders (Mutebers) or Spiritual Head, called some of the Armenian ecclesiastics and questioned them in regard to why the Armenians closed their shops and assembled at the Prelate's house. They answered that:—

1. On the 19th instant an Armenian named Miridjian, a shoemaker, was bargaining to buy a carpet from a Mahommedan, but as they did not agree, some soldiers interfered, and as there was an increase in the dispute, a certain Armenian tinker, Osghian, interfered as a peacemaker, and he and Miridjian were beaten and wounded.

2. Although the parties applied to the Government to have such violence reprimanded, the Government did not attend to it immediately.

3. A Mulazim (Lieutenant), who came from Erzeroum in order to cash some drafts of the War Department, beat and injured an Armenian.

4. A student of divinity went about armed in the bazaars giving zeal to the Mahommedans, exciting them, menacing the Armenians, and giving them to understand that on Bairam all the Armenians would be killed.

But the Government did not give any importance to it, consequently the Armenians gathered at the Prelate's house to talk over the matter quietly, state their condition to His Imperial Majesty, and attract pity.

There is no doubt that all these statements made by the above mentioned are common affairs.

That the Government took the necessary steps is a fact, and that it wanted to have it pass unnoticed is far from being true. But even supposing the local officials did not attend to it properly, the Armenians should have applied to the authorities, which is very easy to do, and if they had the intention or desire to apply to the dust of the feet of the Most Merciful Majesty the Emperor of Emperors, they ought to do it in a polite and usual way.

Everybody knows that often in times past at Tokat events much more serious than these have taken place between Mahommedans and Christians, and as it is done in every country, such things are arranged with friendly feelings, with respect and honour to law, which is deeply impressed in everybody's mind. But this time the Armenians were entirely forgetful of this.

The instigations of a person known to them to be insane, which consisted simply in empty words and insulting language, together with usual events, were taken as excuse enough to immediately close their shops and hasten to the church as if a tribe apart, conveying alarm and disturbance to all people, and the sufferings which followed therefrom. It is a movement that comes forth from the idea in their heads of an existing revolution, and with the facility of a rat spreading trouble, this idea has been developed and exists among the Armenians of Tokat with the object of attracting foreign attention. And this is proved by the fact that the Greeks, Catholics, and Jews, who, acting on the first impulse under the influence of the revolutionary Armenians, had closed their shops immediately, reopened them when they understood that no harm was done to anybody's person or property. And the Armenians only not opening their shops is a great proof of their scheme.

How many times it has passed from mouth to mouth that the Armenian revolutionists will set fire to the Government buildings, attack the holy mosques, and kill the Government officials, the Mahommedan party (Turcophiles), and the Elders of the Moslems, but, in spite of all these threats, the officials and Mahommedans, attributing it to revolutionists, paid no attention.

But this time, the Armenians of Tokat closing their shops all at once, assembling at the Prelate's house, and the firing of some guns gave reason to the Mahommedan population to gather here and there.

From the subsequent dispute which took place, there were of Armenians one killed, eleven slightly wounded, and fourteen beaten, while in comparison with this plotting and malicious movement, the way they have acted, and what they have deserved therefrom, thanks to God and the shadow of His Imperial Majesty, the limits have not been passed over, and peace and tranquillity have not suffered.

Of the Mahommedans, three soldiers and seventeen Mahommedan citizens have been put on the list for imprisonment. Some have already been imprisoned, and others will be.

Of the Armenians, who have been the cause of the trouble and closed their shops, wounded one Turk, beat three, and fired at a Turk with the intention of killing him, five have been imprisoned, and it will be considered necessary to imprison some more.

From the investigation it is understood that the matter has been looked into with great justice and attention.

It has been written to the Mushir of the Fourth Army Corps to take away from Tokat the Mulazim.

Translation of Report by the Tokat Armenian Clergy to their Bishop at Sivas.

The affair of September last, when more than a thousand Turks, encouraged by the officials, attacked the Christians, entered hundreds of Armenian houses, dishonoured women and girls, stole whatever they could find, killed two Armenians, wounded others, and dragged an Armenian, mortally wounded, by the foot through the streets, is well known.

This dreadful affair, if not in quantity, at least in quality, a true picture of a regular massacre, was looked upon with indifference and covered up by the Government. The known authors of this outrage were not only left unpunished, but they were not even subjected to an examination. No Turks were arrested, but hundreds of innocent Armenians were put in prison, subjected to unheard-of tortures, and finally released when the decision of the local Military Court was revoked.

From the mouths of soldiers, police, and officials it was heard in many quarters that "The heads of Giaours belong to the Government, and their property belongs to the people."

Mirza Bey said, "These Christian hogs should be sawn asunder with a dull saw." These threats became more frequent, and that the Giaours should be massacred became a daily talk of the Turks. Daily the Cross, the Bible, and all things sacred to the Christians were cursed by the Mahommedans.

Three weeks ago a Petition was presented to the Mutessarif stating that the Cafedjee Osman had sworn outrageously against the Christian religion, but the Mutessarif did nothing about it. During the past three weeks Turkish boys have committed various petty insults and outrages against the Armenians.

The Armenians in the more distant quarters of the city were especially insulted and threatened. About a month ago the Armenian priest (Vartabed) Ohan, when leaving the church, was seriously assaulted by a Turk, who also called Her Britannic Majesty foul names. A French Jesuit priest was recently stoned by a Turk. The Government made no effort to arrest the Turk, who is well known, but tried to put the outrage on Armenians.

All these insults, &c., occurred while there was an unusual number of high officials and military men in the city. It seems that high officials were encouraging the trouble, and were inciters rather than pacifiers of disturbances.

At the same time, the taxes are being collected with more than usual cruelty. Even taxes not yet due were demanded. The collection of taxes is the only branch of government that seems to exist for the Armenians.

From the beginning of Ramazan threats of massacres of Christians were heard daily.

Suddenly a new face appeared in Tokat. A young man called Mehdi, or Mudjidid, Sunday, 18th March, to call out in the public streets, like a town-crier, "The infidel powers are banded together to destroy us." He invited the Turks to assemble at the Mosque. There he gave them exciting advice. He was treated with honour by the Turkish populace, and prominent Turks gave him money and clothing. He said, "Native and foreign Christians who obey us we will condescend to accept as slaves, otherwise we will slaughter them."

On the 19th an incident took place which burst the threatening bomb.

At 3 or 4 o'clock (A.M. "à la Turque") the Armenians Miridjian Astargian, a shoemaker, and Lelebidjee Osgan Kasagian were bargaining in the market for a carpet. The Turk became angry and began to curse and abuse the Armenians. Five or six Turkish soldiers came and joined in insulting the Armenians, and then attacked and wounded them with their bayonets. The crowd increasing, a great number of Turks, Bashi Bazouks, rushed from every quarter to the scene of the disturbance, and the cry was raised, "Beat and kill the Giaours; let it take place now what is to occur eight days hence."

They began to attack the Armenians in the streets. Then the Armenians in great fear closed their shops and fled. The disturbance and the attack upon Armenians spread throughout all the streets, and in a short time all the Armenians closed their shops and fled to their houses. An influential Turk named Jalezoglou Mahmoud said to some of the Armenians, "Give us the keys of your shops, they will soon be ours."

The Armenians who were wounded at the beginning of the affair by the soldiers went to the authorities and complained to the Commissary of Police. He told them to go and give a Petition to the Mutessarif. The Tabour Aghassi,* who was near by at the time of the quarrel, turned aside and avoided the trouble.

Seeing the lack of interest on the part of the authorities, the Armenians went to the house of the Prelate, near the church. Gradually the numbers increased. Others came saying they had closed their shops on account of the lack of security, and said they could not open them until there was some protection. They demanded that a telegram be sent to His Majesty the Sultan and the Patriarch for immediate relief.

The Prelate communicated the facts to the authorities, upon which the Commissary of Police, Mehmet Effendi, hurried to the place, and after listening indifferently to the complaints, tried to pacify them, saying, "It is nothing, do not be afraid, nothing will happen." But the people could not be pacified by such senseless words, and the Church Council decided to telegraph to the Imperial Palace, at the same time notifying the Governor that they had done so.

While the telegram and Petition to the Governor were being prepared, the report of fire-arms was heard from the old castle, and as if this was a signal, firing began to be heard in other quarters of the city, and a general tumult began. It was generally understood that the Turks were attacking the Armenians round about the church and the Prelate's house with stones and clubs, and the wounded were brought into the Prelate's house. This state of riot continued for some time. Later the Military Commander came with troops, and gendarmes arrived, and they tried to send those who had taken refuge to their homes under escort. It is a sad fact that after taking them some distance the soldiers maltreated those whom they were escorting, or allowed others to ill-treat them. The attack became general. Bashi Bazouks with guns, revolvers, clubs, &c., assaulted the Christians. Ghurékian Kévork, an old man of 60 or 65 years, was butchered by persons well known. The number of seriously wounded is fifty, among whom are children 7 to 13 years of age. Many more were slightly injured.

The Military Commander (who does not mention the Armenians without an oath) did not take any active measures to suppress the riot for two or three hours. Lieutenant-General Mustafa Pasha asked why the Commander did not send troops and by acting promptly prevent the trouble. It is noticed that the Commander did not disperse the mob, but rather encouraged them, saying to the gendarmes, "Let the Bashi Bazouks teach the swine a lesson." Troops also encouraged the mob, and some even took part in attacking the Armenians. Fenerjian Hovakim was seriously wounded by Captain Sadik. Many other Armenians were attacked and beaten by this same zaptieh, whose gun-stock was broken in his beating the Armenians. Ginherjian Mihran received two serious scalp-wounds and a bayonet-wound in the back, as proved by medical examination. Five others state that their wounds were inflicted by gendarmes by means of bayonets and swords. During the attack a soldier was seen to lend his bayonet to a Turkish rough who had no weapon.

The most truthful and careful examination shows that the soldiers and gendarmes did not make any effort to disperse the mob until the number of wounded was rapidly increasing and the lifeless body of Ghurékian Kévork was seen lying in the street, and they began to realize that they would be held responsible.

There are other facts to show that the Government sympathized with the mob in its attack on Armenians. From many sources it is reported that soldiers entered the women's bath, frightening the women and committing other excesses. Goods were stolen and carried off by Kurdis in the presence of the soldiers, and doors and windows were smashed, &c.

On the 20th the Mutessarif sent a letter to the Prelate stating that the Prelate rang the church bells and assembled the people for revolutionary purposes, and that guns and pistols were fired from the church and Armenian houses. These statements are as false as it is true that the Government is trying to throw off the responsibility from itself and put it upon the Armenians. There is no bell in the place where they assembled. The only bell in Tokat is in St. Minas' Church, at the outskirts of the city, and that was not rung. The Armenians are without arms, and could not have fired.

The Government took them all away from the Armenians, and they do not even have an old flint-lock gun or pistol, while the Turks from 5 years of age have knives and fire-

* Gendarme Major.

arms, and constantly threaten the Armenians. Not a single Turk was wounded, while Armenians were wounded with bullets and bayonets. Chuksusian Mardiros was shot in the leg. If the Armenians had returned the attack of the Turks there would have been a great slaughter.

The object of the meeting at the church was to inform His Majesty the Sultan of the necessity of protection. That they had no bad intention is shown by the fact that the Commissary of Police and other police officers were with the Armenians in the church, and no harm was done to them. The Government tries to show even that Ghurékian Kévork was butchered by the Armenians, while it is well known that this deed was done by Turkish butchers whose names are known. After stabbing him in the back, they laid him down on his back and cut his throat, saying "Bismillah!"*

On the evening of the 21st, Turks battered the door of the Jesuit church and threatened to kill the Frères.

We hear that the police gave stringent orders to the City Physician not to give any report on the wounded without first consulting the President of the Military Commission. We observe that the Government is trying to hide the bayonet-wounds, and such wounds are vaguely described as wounds made by a cutting instrument.

His Excellency Khalil Bey arrived on the 23rd. The experience of the past has convinced the Armenians that nothing satisfactory can be hoped from him, and any application for redress is not only useless but dangerous. For it is not forgotten that last September members of the former Armenian Councils and ecclesiastical officials were imprisoned for months because of their applications and correspondence. The object of the Vali's endeavours seems to be to smother the just rights of the Armenians, and by incrimination to put them into prison again.

March 30.—A superficial and deceptive attempt has been made to disarm the Turks. Twenty or thirty Turks were put in prison. Some of them were let out after two or three days; no attempt was made to find the murderers of Ghurékian. Sadik Onbashi is in prison, but nicely treated. We have not heard the arrest of any other soldiers or zaptiehs. Four Armenians have been arrested. Under pressure from the Government a few shops were opened, but were closed again when it was found to be unsafe.

List of Armenians killed and wounded according to the Report of the Government Physician at Tokat:

1. Ghurékian Kévork—Throat cut, dead.
2. Astargian Mirijian—Two wounds on head by cutting instrument and club, bruises on back and left shoulder.
3. Casangian Osgan—Sword-cut on right side, bruises on head.
4. Chatgmian Haïgazoon—Bruises on scalp, deep circular cut on right arm.
5. Halebian Vichen—Club-wound on head, bruises on right arm.
6. Babighian Harutun—Club-wound on face, bruises on left arm.
7. Mevliganian Krikor—Two club-wounds on head, bruises on back.
8. Carligian Osgan—Two club-wounds on head.
9. Niksarlian Garabet—Cuts on right hand, bruises on left arm.
10. Kerterlian Solomon—Five cuts on head, bruises on left arm and back.
11. Gunbergian Mihran—Two cuts on head, one cut in the back.
12. Mangian Ohannes—Three deep cut-wounds on head and bruise on head.
13. Mangilukli Vartan—Two bruises on head, one on face and on left arm.
14. Topalian Kévork—Sabre-cut on head and on left hand.
15. Bozbeyukian Mihran—Sabre-cut on head and bruises on forehead.
16. Chuksuzian Mardiros—Bullet-wound through left leg.
17. Garibian Harutun—Sabre-cut on head.
18. Girtlian Harutun—Bruises on left arm.
19. Yeghiayian Agop—Bruises on head.
20. Fenerjian Hovaghim—Bruises on head, back, and left shoulder.
21. Evyikanian Krikor—Sabre-cut on head, three bruises on head, two on back.
22. Jounsuzian Menzik—Ecchymosis on left shoulder.
23. Azarian Takouhi (woman)—Ecchymosis on face.
24. Bartalian Nazaret—Bruises on head.
25. Yorganjian Hagop—Two bruises on left arm.
26. Gertligian Mihran—Two bruises on right leg.

* "In God's name."

27. Derbabian Nazar—Three extensive sabre-cuts on head, wound by cutting instrument on left side.
28. Bulgarian Harutun—Extensive sabre-wound on head, bruises.
29. Jamgostzian Ohannes—Bruise left eye.
30. Yamayian Garabed—Deep sabre-cut on right shoulder.
31. Karibian Hogas—Dagger-wound in abdomen; dangerous.

No. 139.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 6.)

(No. 265.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, April* 27, 1895.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 229 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond on the subject of the grievances of the Iskan-Topach villagers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 139.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 3, 1895.

Sir,

THE following is an extract from Dr. Jewett's letter of the 26th ultimo on the subject of my despatch of the 21st ultimo:—

"The Commissary of Police, who was sent to investigate the affairs of the Armenian village which was surrounded and plundered by 600 Turks, by fraud got two or three of the villagers to sign a paper saying that the Kaïmakam went to the village with only six servants and zaptiehs and made a proper search. The man who was robbed, one of the robbers, and the man who presented the original report to the Vali have been put in prison. This is what the villagers report to the Bishop . . . ."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 139.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 16, 1895.

Sir,

AS regards the substance of the Iskan-Topach Petition, annexed to my despatch of the 21st ultimo, I am informed by Dr. Jewett that not five rifles, as erroneously stated, but five Martini metallic cartridges were discovered by the authorities in their search.

Dr. Jewett has transmitted to this Consulate a protest in Turkish received by him from fifty-three villagers of Iskan-Topach complaining against the Commissary of Police, who, as reported in my despatch of the 3rd instant, is alleged to have obtained by deception the signatures of two boys and two old men to a false declaration of their grievances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No 140.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May 6.*)

(No. 266.)

Constantinople, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, giving an extract from a private letter on the subject of the Sassoun massacre.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 140.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 11, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of an extract from a private letter, written by a lady attached to the American Mission at Bitlis, after a visit to Moush in the month of February last. Your Excellency will perceive that this letter further confirms the attempts on the part of the local authorities to suppress evidence of a disagreeable nature to the Government, besides giving the names of a number of survivors of the massacres who do not appear to have been summoned before the Commission, but whose statements all agree as to the atrocities committed by the regular troops.

I have reason to believe that Mr. Shipley has had an opportunity of reading it, on its way from Bitlis to Erzeroum, and of noting the contents for the use of the Consular Delegates.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 140.

Extract from Private Letter from a Lady, undated.

(*Vide Procès-verbaux* of Sassoon Commission, Nos. 19 and 21.)

I SAW a man named Tavo, "Reis" of Semal. This Tavo gained admission to the Commission and gave testimony before it. He said a Turk, Sali Agha, came to him and, among other inducements, offered him 250*l.* if he would testify falsely. To this he said, "Will you give me back my brothers?" He said to me, "I would rather be cut in pieces and go to them than tell lies; there is death and judgment." One morning when I was at Moush, the door of the room which I occupied was opened, and in came two persons, women we supposed from their dress. One of them said, "The teacher at Darkevank sent us." I concluded some important errand had brought them to us. One of the persons was a wounded man from the Sassoon district in disguise. He sought an opportunity to appear before the Commission. That he would not be allowed this unless careful measures were taken, we had seen abundant proof. The man's name is Ovak, from Semal. He said there were ten persons in his father's family. His father, a brother, and a cousin were killed by bayonet-wounds before his eyes. One brother and he escaped, both badly wounded. He said the treacherous enemy gave word to the villagers that "there is mercy for you," giving them to understand they were safe; whereupon about 300, led by their priest, Der Ohannes, presented themselves before the officers, avowing that they were the obedient, loyal subjects of the Sultan.

The order was given to take out the eyes of the priest, and this the heartless soldiers did; they then tore away his beard and skinned his face. They pierced his throat and forced him to drink a cup of water, which ran from the wound in his throat right and left. Death at last ended his terrible sufferings. Immediately after this the soldiers were given orders to charge, and a dreadful slaughter by bayonets followed.

Early in this massacre Ovak was severely wounded and fell, others soon fell upon him, and he remained for a time unconscious beneath the bodies of the slain. Rousing from his well-nigh death stupor in the night, he extricated himself with much difficulty by pushing away the corpses above and around him. Slowly and painfully he made his way to some low bushes, among which he hid for three days, eating leaves, roots, and gum from the shrubs. A cousin, Hatchik by name, also from Semal, in passing saw Ovak and helped him to get to the shelter of some great rock not far away. Here in pain and weakness he stayed three days, his cousin bringing him a little food by stealth. Finding he could walk, he set out alone, and by slow stages was able to reach the village of Shushnamerg, where he had an uncle living. Here his friends wrapped him in the skin of a freshly slaughtered sheep. When able to be removed, he was taken to a shelter, where hay and straw were kept in the outskirts of the village. After about a month's stay there he returned to Semal, where surviving members of his father's family were, and had begun to renew some of the houses which the soldiers had torn down and burned a short time before. The attempt to rebuild was in obedience to orders of the Governor or his subordinates.

Ovak was living there with a few others who had escaped the massacre, when word reached them that foreign Consuls had arrived at Moush, and wished to see persons who could testify concerning the events at Sassoon. He came to Pertag village, and was kept for about ten days in hiding there.

The Turks, having heard that a man from Semal was there, tried to find him. The villagers believed that they sought him with the intent to hinder him from appearing before the Commission. He came to us, as I have said, disguised in woman's dress.

I also saw another refugee who said he was from Semal, that his name was Astadour, and that four from his family had been killed. He alluded to the terrible tortures inflicted on Der Ohannes, to his having had his eyes taken out while alive, &c.

At Derkavank I saw three women, refugees from Semal. One of them, with quivering lips and quietly weeping, said, "I had two brothers, a son-in-law, and other relatives killed." All three women said with emphasis that the "black soldiers" (alluding to dark uniforms) attacked and slew by bayonet large numbers of people. They added that protection was offered the women and children on condition that they should accept the Moslem faith; but, they said, rather than do this we risked our lives and fled. After hiding in the shelter of rocks for several days, they were able to make their escape.

At Havoderik a man, by name Toros, also from Semal, told me that his son, a brother, brother's daughter, and a sister were killed in the massacre. He stated that, after five days of the dire conflict, he fled and hid for ten days among trees, subsisting on the fruit of a kind of thistle. He stated that he helped open a pit or trench, and removed and buried five bodies, one of whom was the priest Ohannes, who, he said, met his death after severe and prolonged tortures at the hands of the soldiers. He said that they wished to remove many more bodies and bury them, but the stench was so great that they could not do it. He added, "At the time I buried my sister, I cut off her hair, and it is now in my mother's possession." Also that when his brother was seized and hurried off by the soldiers, he took off his cap and threw it back to his mother, with the words, "They are going to kill me; keep this as a last remembrance." The man was cruelly murdered.

A woman named Rahare, formerly of Telvori, now staying at Havoderik, said, "Our family numbered twelve, of whom five were killed. My husband's brother and his son were hacked in pieces, my husband received a terrible wound, and is now at St. Aghperik monastery. I saw them kill my brother's wife. A soldier took up a large stone and struck her head so violently that her brains were scattered and she fell down dead. When I saw this and the others killed by bayonet, I wept sorely and beat my head so that now I am blind."

Some of the most harrowing statements have come to us as having been told by the soldiers themselves, the narrators claiming to have been unwilling actors in this awful massacre, and aver that they now suffer intense mental torture at the memory of their deeds.

No. 141.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 267.)
Constantinople, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, transmitting a despatch from Mr. Hallward reporting the misconduct of a Turkish Captain, Sheikh Mooss by name. I have called the attention of the Sublime Porte to the facts reported.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 141.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 16, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting the misconduct of a Turkish Captain, who goes by the name of Sheikh Mooss, at Shattakh, in the Vilayet of Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 141.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, April 6, 1895.

Sir,

I WOULD venture to call your attention to the conduct of a Captain in the army stationed at Shattakh, a caza in this vilayet, who goes by the name of Sheikh Mooss, about whom I have frequently heard complaints from the Christians of that region. About six weeks ago he painted a figure of the Cross on a white dog, and paraded it about the streets of the village with the object of exciting the Christians and provoking a disturbance; fortunately, however, the Christians remained quiet and there was no result produced.

This man is in league with the Kurds of the district, and incites them to attack and plunder the Christian villagers, especially any that the authorities may happen to have a grudge against. He is even said to supply the Kurds with ammunition.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 142.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 268.)
Constantinople, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, forwarding a despatch from Mr. Hallward reporting an improvement in the state of affairs at Van and Bitlis.

I have also been informed by Mr. Richardson, a missionary, that the state of Erzingiun has much improved lately, that Zeki Pasha is taking every precaution to prevent an attack by Mahommedans on Christians, and that all Mahommedans, with the exception of the regular soldiers, have been disarmed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 142.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 17, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting an improvement in the position of affairs in that city and in Bitlis as regards the safety of the Christian population; and also that the intention to call out the Redifs, alluded to in the inclosure to my despatch of the 29th ultimo, has apparently been dropped.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 142.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, April 9, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that, according to information I have received from Bitlis, the position of affairs in that town, as regards the safety of the Christians, has decidedly improved of late. Omar Bey, the Acting Governor-General, has given addresses in the mosques urging the Moslems to live at peace with their Armenian neighbours, and to do them no harm, even if they should be the aggressors. This has had a quieting effect, in spite of the efforts of some fanatical Sheikhs to stir up their people to violence.

In the town of Van also the apprehensions entertained by the Christians during Ramazan and Bairam have subsided.

I may add that the project of assembling the Redifs, mentioned in my despatch of the 19th March, appears to have been dropped.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 143.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 269.)
Constantinople, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo giving information respecting prisoners at Adana.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 143.

Consul Burnham to Sir P. Currie.

Aleppo, April 16, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt (transmitted through Her Britannic Majesty's Consul-General at Smyrna) of two lists of Armenian prisoners confined at Adana and Pyas.

I believe I can supply full information as to those confined at Adana without reference to the Vice-Consulate at Mersyna, but the number of those confined at Pyas is, I understand, much larger than stated, and I must apply to Alexandretta for a report, which will entail delay.

Of those confined at Adana, the Archimandrite Khorène was released about a month ago, and the young lad, Ervante, is dead.

The following are now in Adana prison, where they have been confined about eighteen months:—

Haupartzoum.
Boghos (I).
Hovhannes.
Boghos (II).
Boghos (III). Papass Oghlou Boghos, not the priest Boghos, as stated.
Devoleth Daderian, dentist, of Hadjin.
Serkis Badvalli.
Manouk Balian.
Garabed Derghazarian.
Hovhannes Kilidjian.
Hovsep Kilidjian.
Kevork Karaoghlanian.
Manass Balian.

I understand that all of these were arrested for being implicated in treasonable correspondence, and Papass Oghlou Boghos for having in addition caused the death of a zaptieh who entered a house in search of papers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 144.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 271.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 30, 1895*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, inclosing a despatch from Mr. McGregor on the state of feeling between Christians and Moslems in Palestine.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 144.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Beyrout, April 19, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy, in duplicate, of a letter addressed to me by Mr. McGregor, embodying the observations made by him in regard to the state of feeling between Moslems and Christians in Palestine during the course of his recent journey from Jerusalem to Haifa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 144.

Vice-Consul McGregor to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

Beyrout, April 16, 1895.

Sir,

IN accordance with your instructions, I have the honour to submit herewith the following notes made during my recent stay in Jerusalem, and my subsequent journey overland to Nablous in connection with the current rumours regarding the state of feeling between Christians and Moslems in Palestine.

During my four months' residence in Jerusalem I availed myself of every opportunity of ascertaining by conversation with missionaries, travellers, and natives in how far the common reports as to increasing want of harmony between Moslems and Christians were founded on fact, and I regret to say that, although the nature of the case renders it difficult to support assertions by concrete facts, there is a general

consensus of opinion in confirmation of the disquieting rumours which have for some time been in circulation.

I was informed that among the peasant population there is no longer that cordiality which used to be observed, the influence of the Mahommedan religious teachers having so far accentuated the line of cleavage between the two communities that the general attitude of the Moslems towards their Christian fellow-subjects is now one of extreme coolness and reserve, bordering upon distinct hostility.

It can hardly be doubted that the Ottoman authorities have a certain share in fostering this feeling of mutual mistrust, and, as a matter of fact, every effort is being made to discourage intercourse between the Moslem and the Christian sections of the population, while the disadvantageous position of Christians in all judicial matters is a subject of loud complaint.

Before leaving Jerusalem I had a conversation with a gentleman newly arrived from Damascus viâ Nablous, and he informed me that during the journey he and his wife were constantly stoned and insulted by the Moslem peasantry, who also made free use of the blasphemous and obscene expressions in which their vocabulary is so rich. Even at Hebron, which is only about four hours' drive from Jerusalem, and frequently visited by tourists, it is a matter of common occurrence for Europeans to be stoned and annoyed by the fanatical inhabitants.

Being accompanied by an escort, I cannot say that I met with any discourtesy on the part of the natives, but, during my stay at Nablous, I heard bitter complaints of the many ways in which the soldiers and townspeople generally contrive to vent their hostile feelings towards Christians and foreigners, and I need hardly say that extortion and corruption among the officials have come to be regarded as the normal condition of things. The missionaries assured me that it was unsafe to walk about alone in the streets of Nablous, and the ladies connected with the Mission cannot venture outside their compound except under the disguise afforded by Turkish female costume.

The British cemetery, too, the difficulties connected with which formed the object of my journey, has for years past been laid waste by the Mahommedans of Nablous, the wall having been repeatedly broken down, and the inclosure used as a deposit for refuse from the neighbouring soap factories; but, as I have already reported to you, the Mutessarif of Nablous has formally undertaken, in consequence of my representations, to have the cemetery restored to a proper condition, and protected from further desecration.

At Nazareth and Haifa, where the Christian population is proportionately larger than at Nablous, I found things apparently more satisfactory; but the medical missionary at Nazareth assured me that the feeling against Europeans and Christians in general was very strong, and suppressed by circumstances, and he was evidently of opinion that the Ottoman authorities, and, at their instigation, the Mollahs, were doing their utmost to foster the growing animosity against everything Christian and European.

I have, &c.
(Signed) JAMES McGREGOR.

No. 145.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 273.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, April 30, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, giving an extract from a letter from Dr. Jewett, reporting that a Mollah has been inciting Moslems against Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 145.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 22, 1895.

Sir,

THE danger of allowing a lunatic to remain in a country where relations are strained between Turks and Christians suggests itself, I think, on the perusal of the following lines from Dr. Jewett's letter, dated Sivas, the 16th instant:—

"As already reported, a young Mollah, called Mehdi, incited the Turks at Tokat to massacre the Christians. He was brought here and imprisoned for a day or two, and then let out. Yesterday he began to preach in the same strain at a mosque or 'tekeh' here, and he was carried by the police to prison again, in spite of his protests and the protests of numerous Turks, who consider him a harmless lunatic.

"I have not seen him, but from what I have heard concerning him I doubt if he is a genuine lunatic."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 146.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 6.)

(No. 274.)

Constantinople, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond giving an extract from a letter of Dr. Jewett on the subject of the Adzbeder prisoners.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 146.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 22, 1895.

Sir,

YOUR Excellency's telegram of the 6th instant was answered by me on the 14th, to the effect that the Armenian Patriarch's report of many arrests made and twelve prisioners condemned to death consequent on the Adzbeder Mudir being found dead seemed to Dr. Jewett practically correct.

I have now the honour to give here in this connection the following extract from his letter of the 16th instant:—

"I tried from various sources to get the information you desired in regard to the Adzbeder prisoners, but no one seemed willing or able to give the facts. However, being convinced that your report was practically correct, I sent you a telegram on the 13th instant to that effect.

"Yesterday the Procureur-Général returned from Tokat, and to-day I got the following account of the Adzbeder affair from him:

"Some months ago (I failed to get the exact date) when the Mudir of Adzbeder was sitting in the village Court-room with a zaptieh, another Turk, and an Armenian, four men came in, more or less disguised, and killed the Mudir and the Turk and wounded the Armenian. The zaptieh ran away for help. He said he could not tell who the murderers were. The wounded Armenian said they were Armenians, and gave their names. They were arrested, and after a day or two they confessed. One of them gave the names of seven other Armenians who were stationed outside the Court room to protect the murderers. Most of these were arrested also. These men gave the names of a lot of Kara-hissar merchants who were parties to this revolutionary conspiracy.

"In all, fifty-five were put in prison. Only those most concerned were tried, the rest were released. Seven were condemned to death, three to hard labour for life, and one or more who escaped arrest are declared outlaws. The Armenians claim that all these prisoners were terribly tortured.

"As I reported in my letter of the 30th January, 1895,* the prisoners sent a Petition to the Vali saying they were being terribly tortured by the Mutessarif of Kara-hissar. The Vali paid no attention to the Petition, and these prisoners sent a second Petition to the Sultan. An inquiry was ordered. The Vali sent some of his faithful men, and they reported that the stories of torture were all made up."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 147.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 6.)

(No. 275.)

Constantinople, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting that, owing to the measures taken by the authorities, the Easter festivities passed off without disturbance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 147.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, April 22, 1895.

Sir,

THE Easter festivities passed off without disturbances, and so has yesterday, that of Low Sunday, when, as it is customary once a-year, a large concourse of people resorted to an Armenian monastery on a hill 3 miles from Trebizond.

It is therefore with pleasure I am able to report that the measures taken by the authorities to prevent disorders have proved efficacious. The police, the gendarmerie, and the troops have been day and night most indefatigable, and have thus in their exertions suppressed many a street quarrel, which, in these critical times, might possibly have led to serious disturbances.

The Vali, Cadri Bey, cordially aided by the Military Commandant, the Ferik Hamdi Pasha, superintended in person the steps taken towards the maintenance of public tranquillity, one of these steps being the retention in custody of some twenty Moslem roughs and rowdies during the Christian festivities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 148.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 6.)

(No. 278.)

Constantinople, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

A DESPATCH from Mr. Consul Hallward, transmitted to your Lordship in my No. 223 of the 14th April, mentioned that the daughter of an Armenian priest, called Daniel, was detained at Bashkalé by a Kurd, and in a subsequent telegram Mr. Hallward stated that pressure was being used to make her become a Mahommedan. I accordingly caused the case to be brought to the notice of Said Pasha, who at once telegraphed to Van on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

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* See despatch No. 15, February 5, 1895

No. 149.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 279.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 30, 1895.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 158 of the 19th instant, respecting the outrage on Armenians at Tchipol, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that a *pro-memorid* reporting the facts of the case was sent in to the Sublime Porte on the 17th instant.

Information of a similar nature has been received by the Russian Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 150.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 280.)
My Lord, *Pera, April 30, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a communication which has been received from the Armenian Patriarch, reporting numerous forced conversions of Armenians to Islamism in the Vilayets of Sivas and Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 150.

Communication from the Armenian Patriarch on forced Conversion of Armenians to Islamism.

UN rapport en date du 10 Mars (v. s.), 1895, arrivé de Gurino (Vilayet de Sivas) contient une description bien pénible de l'état de la population Arménienne du district de Mandjelik et annonce la conversion forcée de plusieurs familles Arméniennes, qui ont pris cette décision pour se soustraire aux vexations insupportables auxquelles elles étaient sujettes.

Un riche émigré Musulman (Mouhadjir), Kol Aghassi Hussein Agha, est devenu un véritable fléau pour cette population, dont la religion, l'honneur, et la vie sont en danger continuel à cause des tyrannies commises par ce triste personnage.

Le Vali de Sivas, parfaitement au courant des méfaits commis, n'a jusqu'à présent pris aucune mesure pour en empêcher la continuation.

Huit familles Chrétiennes du village Mandjelik ne pouvant plus supporter les tyrannies de ce Mouhadjir, ont dû embrasser la religion Musulmane et se sont réfugiées au village du tyran pour implorer sa protection.

Si l'état actuel continue, on craint avec raison que plusieurs autres familles voulant se soustraire aux tyrannies dont les Chrétiens sont victimes, suivront, par désespoir, l'exemple de ces renégats.

Un autre rapport en date du 1er Février, 1895, arrivé de Van, se plaint grandement des tyrannies commises dans cette ville en vue d'obliger les Arméniens à se convertir à l'Islamisme. Sous l'administration du Gouverneur actuel, depuis un an et demi, plus de quarante Chrétiens, parmi lesquels une veuve Arménienne nommée Mariam et ses enfants mineurs ont été forcés à embrasser l'Islamisme.

Ces conversions ont lieu surtout en ce qui concerne les femmes et les jeunes filles, sans les formalités d'usage, qui exigent la présentation de la personne désireuse de changer de religion, aux membres Chrétiens de Medjlissé-Idare, pour faire sa déclaration en leur présence, ainsi qu'un Ecclésiastique, délégué par l'autorité religieuse et aux membres de sa famille, pour entendre leurs exhortations lui conseillant de ne pas nier la religion de ses ancêtres et de ne pas se séparer de la maison paternelle.

De même, des femmes sont souvent enlevées et envoyées auprès des Kurdes, qui les gardent pendant des mois. Plus tard, on les amène à Van et on les livre à quelques Notables Musulmans, connus par leur immoralité.

Aux plaintes formulées contre cette manière d'agir, le Vali répond toujours par

les mêmes paroles: "C'est conforme au Chériat! C'est la prescription de la loi Musulmane!"

La population Arménienne, livrée au désespoir, émigre en partie, tandis que plusieurs personnes embrassent l'Islamisme, espérant ainsi de jouir d'une vie relativement calme. C'est la ruine complète de l'élément Arménien dans ce centre important de l'Arménisme, ruine sciemment préparée par le Vali, Bahri Pacha.

Le rapport ajoute que l'envoi d'une Commission d'Enquête pour les massacres de Sassoon a causé une recrudescence de fanatisme parmi les Musulmans de Van, ce qui est cause de craintes continuelles parmi les Chrétiens de cette ville relativement à leur sécurité.

No. 151.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 284.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 1, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a letter which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch, giving a summary of events at Shabin-Kara-hissar, Van, Adana, and Bilejik.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 151.

Résumé of a Report giving a Summary of Events at Shabin-Kara-hissar, Van, Adana, and Bilejik.

Le 24 Décembre (v. s.), 1894.

LES prisonniers politiques se trouvant actuellement dans les cachots à Chabine-Kara-hissar: Siméon Djiknavorian, Missak Djohdlokian, Hapeth Térékelian, Manouk Véhredian, Tatéos Evredian, Artin Térékelian, Agope Derderian, Krikor Setrak, Donik Derdikian, Vartan Chalmanian, Avak Dourikian, Carnik Oghanian, Dikran Sussian, Artin Gotikian, Kéork Boghossian, Artin Tatéossian, Dirlad Boyadjian, et Krikor Kazandjian, protestent vivement contre les injustices et les tortures dont le Mutessarif de l'endroit et plusieurs fonctionnaires du Gouvernement se sont rendus coupables envers eux.

La première victime de ces procédés barbares a été le jeune Missak Djohdlekian, à peine âgé de 21 ans, et de santé très délicate. Ce jeune homme a été arrêté plusieurs jours après le crime, sous la prévention d'être impliqué dans un assassinat commis au village d'Adzbeder. Il a été nuitamment conduit, par ordre du Mutessarif, dans une écurie obscure, où il a reçu la bastonnade avec une telle cruauté qu'il est tombé évanoui. Depuis ce jour, ce jeune homme est sujet à l'épilepsie, dont il a journellement deux ou trois accès très pénibles.

Le Mutessarif a fait ainsi torturer ce jeune homme pour l'obliger à dénoncer les assassins, qu'il ne connaissait nullement.

Plus tard, le Mutessarif et ses acolytes ont jugé qu'il était préférable de faire exécuter les tortures dans le village d'Andréass à sept heures de la ville. Les prisonniers précités qui avaient été arrêtés dans la ville et aux environs simultanément avec Missak, ont été transportés dans ce village, où le Mutessarif les a fait venir, souvent trois ou quatre fois dans la même nuit, dans la cour de la bâtisse Gouvernementale, et là, en présence du Caïmacam et de plusieurs fonctionnaires et habitants, fait battre avec des gourdins, exigeant qu'ils dénoncent les membres d'un prétendu Comité. Le Mutessarif, le Caïmacam, Mehmed Ali Effendi, membre du Conseil Administratif du sandjak, et Edhem Bey, Greffier, ont personnellement pris part à ces bastonnades. Pour empêcher les prisonniers de crier, un gendarme bâillonnait la bouche du supplicié avec ses mains, tandis que plusieurs autres lui tenaient les mains et les pieds, pour faciliter la bastonnade. Souvent les suppliciés tombaient évanouis; alors on les réveillait en aspergeant leurs figures avec de l'eau et la bastonnade recommençait de plus belle. Mais ce qui était plus cruel encore, c'était l'emploi des tenailles, avec lesquelles on retirait la peau des suppliciés. Plusieurs prisonniers ont eu leurs corps absolument meurtris et ensanglantés; tandis que quelques autres, conduits chez le

Caïmacam, ont été pendus avec des cordes sous les bras et ont continué à recevoir la bastonnade dans cette position.

Pendant toutes ces tortures, les cris des suppliciés étaient entendus dans les environs du village.

Les prisonniers se trouvant dans la prison de Chabinc-Cara-Hissar et les habitants Arméniens et Turcs du village d'Andréass témoignent de ces tortures.

C'est par de tels procédés que le Mutessarif et ses acolytes ont réussi a faire signer une déclaration préparée par eux, par laquelle les prisonniers se reconnaissaient coupables d'être affiliés à un Comité révolutionnaire et dénonçaient plusieurs autres personnes comme impliquées dans l'affaire. Le Sieur Avak Dourikian, instituteur, l'un des accusés, tout en apposant sa signature, a déclaré qu'il donnait sa signature pour se soustraire momentanément à la torture; mais que devant les Tribunaux il protesterait contre les procédés employés et déclarerait la vérité.

Aussitôt transféré à la prison de Chabinc-Kara-hissar, Avak Dourikian a fait les mêmes déclarations en présence du Juge d'Instruction et a demandé justice. Mais le Mutessarif ayant été renseigné de ces paroles de Dourikian l'a fait comparaître devant lui et a exigé qu'il confirmât la déclaration écrite; Dourikian a répondu par un refus formel et a persisté dans cette attitude, malgré les menaces de nouvelles tortures que Saïd Agha, Commissaire-en-chef de la Police, a proférées en se rendant nuitamment dans le cachot où Dourikian était enfermé.

Le Mutessarif a également fait venir en sa présence le nommé Krikor Donikian et l'a aussi pressé pour obtenir la confirmation de la déclaration écrite; sur le refus formel de celui-ci, Eumer Feizi Effendi, Greffier, qui assistait aux débats, s'est rué sur lui et lui a serré la gorge, tandis que Edhem Effendi, également Greffier, lui tirait les moustaches, dont il a arraché un côté.

Les suppliciés ont voulu télégraphier à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et au Vali de Sivas mais le Mutessarif a longtemps empêché la transmission du télégramme, qu'on n'a pu faire parvenir à ses adresses que tout dernièrement encore.

The Situation at Van.

Le 15 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

La situation à Van devient de plus en plus critique par suite de la continuation de la politique de vexation, qui semble animer les autorités locales. Des centaines d'Arméniens se trouvent dans les cachots, victimes de dénonciations dues à la vénalité, à des rancunes personnelles, et au fanatisme. Chaque jour de nouvelles arrestations ont lieu. L'insécurité est complète, et le déni de justice des plus flagrants.

Voici un fait, entre mille, qui donnera une idée des procédés qui sont mis ici en pratique pour livrer les Arméniens au désespoir.

Le prêtre Der Serkis, desservant l'église Arménienne du village Averak, situé près de la ville, les nommés Miguerditch Maksoudian, Avedis Boghayan, Agop Gandoyan, habitants du quartier Aykesdan de Van, et diverses autres personnes de la ville et des environs, ont été arrêtés, il y a un an, sous la prévention d'avoir projeté assassiner Bahri Pacha, Gouverneur de Van.

Pas même un indice n'existait pour prouver la culpabilité de ces gens.

Les autorités locales, pour arriver à leurs fins, ont arrêté un paysan nommé Kévork, charpentier, qui, à la suite des tortures qu'on lui a fait subir, a fait des dénonciations mensongères. Quoique aucune autre preuve n'existât, les accusés ont été condamnés à la peine de mort. L'injustice de ce jugement était tellement criarde que la Cour de Cassation siégeant à Constantinople n'a pu confirmer l'arrêt. L'affaire est donc revenue devant la Cour d'Appel de Van, et le charpentier Kévork a avoué cette fois qu'il avait déposé sous l'impression des tortures, que les condamnés étaient des innocents, et qu'il demandait le transfert du procès devant la juridiction d'une autre ville pour pouvoir dénoncer ceux qui avaient fait usage de pression et de torture pour l'obliger à cette déposition mensongère. Il a fait inscrire cette demande dans les pièces officielles du Tribunal. Les accusés ont de même déclaré qu'ils demandaient le transfert du procès; que le Vali, étant parti civil, ils ne voulaient pas être jugés à Van. Mais le Tribunal, sans attacher importance à ces déclarations, a simplement confirmé l'arrêt précédent.

L'affaire est remise de nouveau à la Cour de Cassation de Constantinople, et il est à craindre que l'arrêt reçoive sa confirmation définitive. Le Vali, Bahri Pacha, y travaille pour que l'injustice commise ne soit pas dévoilée.

Les accusés ont télégraphié à son Excellence le Ministre de la Justice, à son Excellence le Procureur-Général près la Cour de Cassation, et au Président de la Chambre des Requêtes pour demander le transfert. Le charpentier Kévork s'est de même adressé aux autorités centrales dans le même but.

Le 28 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

Une habitante Arménienne de Manazguerd, la demoiselle Khordé, a été enlevée par les Kurdes et obligée par des menaces à embrasser l'Islamisme. Cette demoiselle, ainsi que sa cousine mineure, également enlevée, ont été emmenées à Van et cachées pendant des semaines entières.

A la suite de plusieurs démarches le Vali s'est enfin trouvé dans l'obligation de presser les Kurdes pour lui présenter la demoiselle mineure, qui est une enfant.

La loi exigeait que cette demoiselle soit simplement livrée à l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne, la conversion des mineurs ne devant pas être admise. Mais le Vali s'est contenté d'une simple déclaration de la jeune fille, disant qu'elle avait embrassé l'Islamisme de bon gré, et l'a livrée de nouveau aux Kurdes.

Quinze Arméniens de Bache-Kalé, et douze Arméniens du quartier Baghlar de Van et du district de Moks, ont également embrassé de force l'Islamisme. Sur les démarches de l'autorité ecclésiastique le Vali a donné des ordres pour les faire venir en sa présence, mais cet ordre n'a reçu aucune exécution jusqu'à présent.

Le 13 *Mars* (v. s.), 1895.

Nous avons appris avec regret que des attaques de la part de la population Turque avaient eu lieu à Yozgat et à Tokat. On assure que des incidents de même nature ont également eu lieu à Sivas et à Zilé. Ici, la population Turque est surexcitée, et il ne faut pas croire que cette surexcitation se calmera par le simple effet du temps. Les Turcs projettent le massacre de tous les Chrétiens, et ce massacre aura lieu si des mesures énergiques ne sont pas prises.

L'insécurité est telle dans la ville et aux environs qu'on n'ose plus se risquer dans une rue un peu déserte en plein jour et les voyageurs retardent leurs départs.

The Situation in Cilicie.

Le 5 *Février* (v. s.), 1895.

Vingt-deux Arméniens d'Alexandrette et des environs, dont plusieurs des adolescents de 16 à 19 ans, se trouvent depuis sept mois emprisonnés à Adana, sous la prévention d'être des révolutionnaires. Deux de ces prisonniers sont dernièrement morts, ne pouvant plus supporter les tortures et les outrages barbaresques qu'on leur faisait subir. La santé des autres est grandement altérée et leurs familles vouées à la misère la plus noire. Toute la population Arménienne, ainsi que les Turcs et les résidents étrangers, témoignent de leur innocence.

M. Boghoss Chamlian, Drogman du Consulat des États-Unis d'Amérique, est également emprisonné.

La situation du village Arménien de Belen, situé entre Alexandrette et Alep, et composé de 400 maisons, est digne de toute compassion. Les trois prêtres de l'église de l'endroit, les deux instituteurs de l'école, les membres de l'Éphorie et vingt-cinq habitants sont emprisonnés à Alep par suite d'une dénonciation calomnieuse. L'église est fermée, faute de desservant. Le service Divin n'a plus lieu; on enterre les morts sans cérémonie et les nouveaux-nés ne reçoivent pas le baptême.

Les habitants du hameau Kirik-Han de ce village, qui formaient vingt-cinq maisons, ont dû dernièrement émigrer pour se soustraire aux vexations commises.

Les Turcs de l'endroit, qui oppressaient ces pauvres Arméniens se sont empressés de prendre possession des maisons, champs, &c., abandonnés.

L'Archimandrite Khorène, qui se rendait dernièrement d'Alep à Sis, a été arrêté à Payass, par des paysans Turcs, qui l'ont livré à la police, après l'avoir battu. Il a été conduit à Adana, où il se trouve actuellement sous les verroux. On ne sait pas de quoi il est accusé. Mais il ne s'est rendu coupable d'aucun manquement aux lois de l'Empire.

(Les desservants de l'Église Arménienne de Belen ont été amenés dernièrement à Constantinople et livrés au Patriarcat Arménien. Mais la situation est la même dans le pays et l'église continue à rester fermée).

Situation at Bilédjik.

Le 1er Mars (v. s.), 1895.

Les instituteurs des écoles Arméniennes des villages Tchalgara et Assarlik, un maître-répétiteur et quatre élèves se trouvent depuis huit mois en prison à Seuyud.

Ils sont accusés d'avoir chanté des hymnes nationaux Arméniens. Une association d'élèves, qui procurait du papier, des livres, &c., aux enfants indigents fréquentant l'école, a été considérée comme association révolutionnaire.

Six habitants des dits villages se trouvent également sous les verroux sans qu'aucune preuve sérieuse existât contre eux.

Voici les noms de ces prisonniers avec leurs âges :—

	Ans.
Mardiross Arslanian, instituteur à l'école Arménienne d'Assarlik	27
Avédis Der Mossoulian, instituteur à l'école de Tchalgara	31
Garabeth Ghazarian, maître-répétiteur	15
Hovsep Haroutiounian, élève	14
Pénianine Haroutiounian, élève	13
Garabeth Sékelian, élève	11
Serabion Arakelian, élève	10
Mardig Ayanian	23
Setrak Arakelian	34
Krikor Arakelian	40
Agop Megueurditchian	38
Hiroutiour Boyadjian	35
Glazaross Torossian	

Situation at Pinga.

Le 28 Mars (v. s.), 1895.

(Traduction.)

Une brigade de gendarmerie, accompagnée d'une horde de Bachi-Bozouks armés, à la recherche du fils considéré suspect du nommé Toross, habitant du village de Palanka, a assiégé de grand matin le village de Pinga et déclarant que le fugitif devait se trouver dans le dit village, a exigé sa livraison.

Quoique l'office Divin ne soit pas encore terminé, les gendarmes agissaient avec une telle brutalité que le prêtre Der Agope Tafarian, desservant de l'église de l'endroit, a dû quitter l'office et se mettre en rapport avec les gendarmes, pour les calmer.

Le fugitif ne se trouvant pas dans le village, le prêtre ne pouvait que dire la vérité. Mais le chef de la brigade n'a pas ajouté foi aux paroles du prêtre; après avoir fait emprisonner les habitants mâles de l'endroit, il a fait exercer une recherche minutieuse dans les habitations, faisant ouvrir jusqu'au moindre coffre et paquet. On a saisi des livres de piété, imprimés avec l'autorisation du Gouvernement, des fusils de chasse et jusqu'aux couteaux de cuisine, qui ont été envoyés à Sivas et qui y restent jusqu'à ce jour.

Les gendarmes ont demandé aussi à exercer des recherches dans l'église Arménienne. Le prêtre Der Agope s'y est vivement opposé déclarant que la brigade n'en avait pas le droit, que le sergent devait au moins référer de la chose à ses supérieurs. Mais celui-ci a simplement fait arrêter le prêtre, après quoi la recherche a eu lieu, naturellement sans résultat.

Les gendarmes ont pénétré jusqu'à la sacristie; plusieurs livres et des papier relatifs aux propriétés de l'église ont été saisis, mais le Gouvernement les a retournés plus tard, n'y ayant trouvé rien de suspect.

Les recherches se sont répétées encore plusieurs fois.

(Ces faits se sont passés en Décembre dernier; le rapport a tardé d'arriver à cause des difficultés connues dans l'envoi des lettres.)

No. 152.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May 6.*)

(No. 287.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 2, 1895.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 153 of the 12th instant, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I instructed Mr. Block, my Chief Dragoman, to leave with Said Pasha a note of the cases of the Armenians in prison at Yozgat.

His Excellency expressed surprise at their being condemned to death on evidence so slight as that stated, but said that the Government must take strong measures to prevent a repetition of such disturbances as had occurred at Yozgat. He held out no hope of the sentences being cancelled or mitigated unless a general amnesty should be decreed by the Sultan.

He had no information as to the probability of such an amnesty, but said that the list of Armenian political prisoners asked for by His Imperial Majesty was now ready, and comprised some 200 persons.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 153.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May 6.*)

(No. 288.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 2, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from the British Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, inclosing a list of Armenian prisoners in the Vilayets of Diarbekir and Kharput and giving information regarding them.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 153.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Sir P. Currie.

Sir,

Diarbekir, April 12, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to respectfully acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch bearing date the 14th ultimo, transmitting therewith a list of Armenians in prison in towns of the districts of this Vice-Consulate and requesting me to furnish your Excellency with such information as I may possess regarding them.

I have, with your Excellency's permission, to inclose a list of the prisoners' names, adding what information I was able to obtain at the time of their arrest and imprisonment concerning the nature of the accusation brought against each, and the sentences passed on them by the Criminal Courts at the Diarbekir and Kharput Vilayets.

I have, &c.
(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN

Inclosure 2 in No. 153.

Memorandum by Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian.

ARMENIANS in the Diarbekir prison :—
Asdour Kaisarlian, of Palou.
Kapriel Kaisarlian, of Palou.
Arakel Kaisarlian, of Palou.
Nerses, of Palou.
Kikor Boudoukian, of Palou.
Nigoghos Fariskian, of Palou.

These were arrested at Palou in December 1891 under the following circumstances. One night thieves were trying to break into Armenian houses, and the Armenians in that quarter of the town, as is the custom under such circumstances, fired pistols to give the alarm and frighten the burglars. The Kaïmakam arrested fifteen men and telegraphed to the Governor of Arghani Maden stating that the Armenians were in revolt. The Governor, in his turn, reported the same to the Vali. Upon the order of the Governor-General the accused were brought to Maden, where they were

tried; seven of them were acquitted, and the remaining eight condemned for seven years to be shut up in a citadel. After being incarcerated in Maden two years, they were, by the order of the Minister of Justice, sent to Diarbekir, there to undergo the remaining term of their imprisonment. As Diarbekir is a walled city, the authorities, as they always do in like cases, took bail for them and they were permitted to live in the town on the condition that they should present themselves now and then to the Commanders of Police for identification; last summer, however, without any apparent reason, they were again imprisoned and are still in the prison. Among the seven men named in the above list there was also a certain priest Kevork, who being already in indifferent health died lately in the prison.

Teacher Kevork Shahinian. This man some time ago wrote and delivered a lecture in Severek. The lecture was found upon his person, when he was at once arrested, tried in Diarbekir, and condemned for life. He is accused of having spoken in his lecture to the detriment of the Turks and their officials. What he said, as I understand, was not of a nature to deserve such a severe punishment.

Samuel Zorian, of Diarbekir. The case of Samuel Zorian has already been reported in detail, and it appears his imprisonment for a term of five years is not in accordance with the law.

Khevork Chakudjian, of Diarbekir. The house of this man was searched, by higher orders, last year. Among his papers some were found, it is said, involving him in sedition. How many papers were found, and of what sort, and whether they could legally establish the charge, no one knows. He was condemned to nine years' imprisonment; but the man himself is a very doubtful character. He was always thought to be engaged in propogating seditious ideas among the Armenians.

Hossrp Tadjirian, of Diarbekir. His condemnation and imprisonment has nothing to do with the political question. He is accused of coining false money; his sentence was lately quashed by the Court of Cassation, and he is about to be retried.

Vilayet of Mamuret-ul-Aziz.

In the prison at Kharput:—
1. Daniel Hatzakordjian, of Arabkir.
2. Boghos Bozadjian, of Arabkir.
3. Kirkor Miserlian, of Arabkir.
4. Mardiros Terzian, of Arabkir.
5. Migirdich Khizandjian, of Arabkir.
6. Hagop Derejian, of Arabkir.
7. Krikor Sandukhian, of Arabkir.
8. Pilibos Eramian, of Arabkir.
9. Hovhannes Kapuelian, of Antchesti (Egin).
10. Pilibos Khasigian, of Antchesti (Egin).
11. Khachadour Meleonian, of Sidjk (Egin).
12. Meleon Papazian, of Sidjk (Egin).
13. Vartan Gouldamian, of Sidjk (Egin).
14. Boghos Saraflan, of Sidjk (Egin).
15. Diradour, of Sidjk (Egin).
16. Kikor Teholakian, of Sidjk (Egin).
17. Alexander Meleonian, of Sidjk (Egin).
18. Khachadour Keremian, of Kouron Tchaj (Egin)
19. Serop Gemreghian, of Kouron Tchaj (Egin).
20. Eram Keshishian, of Kouron Tchaj (Egin).
21. Mardiros Reisian, of Kouron Tchaj (Egin).
22. Vahan Zoulalian, of Kouron Tchaj (Egin).
23. Asdvadzadour, of Husenik (Kharput).
24. Seventeen Armenians, of Miadun (Chimishgezek).

In the prison of Egin:—
25. Two men from the village of Sidjk (Egin).

In the prison of Khozat:—
26. Markar, of Namsa (Chimishgezek).

Information regarding the prisoners Nos. 1, 2, and 3 were accused of having murdered a policeman in Arabkir and of being active members of a revolutionary

Committee. Whether these charges have been proved to the full satisfaction of the law is not known; but it appears to all impartial observers, after taking into consideration the circumstances of the cases, that the Government has made a good case out of it. They were sentenced to death, but this sentence was afterwards commuted to imprisonment for life.

Nos. 4, 5, and 6. They were arrested in Dersim by a Kurdish Chief, in company with No. 1, who, after the murder in Arabkir, disappeared, and also with Shimavon, a Persian-Armenian subject and a true revolutionist. These five are accused of having been actively engaged in propagating seditious opinions in Arabkir, and in Dersim they were trying to persuade the Kurds to join with them and rise against the authorities after their trial by the Appeal Court.

Nos. 4 and 5 were condemned to imprisonment for life, and No. 6, being only 15 years of age, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment, after finishing the term of his punishment to be five years more under the surveillance of the police. This, of course, was a very severe punishment for a child of that age.

Nos. 7 and 8 were accused of having advanced money to revolutionary parties. This was not proved, but in searching their houses a printed song and book were found which were considered seditious, and they were condemned to two and a-half years' punishment. Although they have now undergone their term of punishment they are still in prison.

Nos. 9 and 10. At Constantinople a man of their village was arrested among whose papers was found a letter in which there was salutation from these men. Then by orders from the capital Nos. 9 and 10 were arrested. Among their papers a letter and the copy of an address were found written sixteen years ago on the occasion of the anniversary of the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem. These were considered seditious, and after ten months' imprisonment in Egin they were sent to Kharput, where they were imprisoned without being put upon their trial.

Nos. 11 to 22. All these were accused of being active members of a secret revolutionary Committee. Papers were found in their houses and on their persons implicating them more or less, and it is stated that a highly treasonable paper was found in the house of No. 11, and that a similar paper was found in the house of No. 12. On the person of No. 18 a paper was found signed with a feigned name, in which a vow of fidelity to the national cause is made. No. 17 is accused of having written a letter under a feigned signature and of sending it through a certain Haroutune Hagopian, who died some time since in prison, to three Armenians, directing them to arm themselves and attack the zaptiehs and rescue No. 17 from their hands while being conducted to Kharput. These have all been condemned to be shut up in a citadel from eight to ten years.

No. 23. Nothing is known concerning the charge brought against No. 23, but he is condemned to eighteen months' imprisonment.

No. 24. Some goods and a certain amount of money were sent last winter to a man named Adjemian, at Miadun, a village of Chimishgezek. On the way the money was stolen, and the muleteer was suspected as the perpetrator of the theft, and consequently was subjected to examination. Exasperated at this, the muleteer told the Government that Adjemian was a member of a revolutionary Society, consequently, the house of the accused was examined, where a note-book was found containing names with small sums of money against each. On being questioned, Adjemian said that they were contributions from the villagers towards the support of the village priest and teacher. The answer did not satisfy the Government. They arrested and threw into prison at Khozat twenty-two men from that village, and also summoned under guard fourteen men from Aleppo, also belonging to the same village, making in all thirty-six men. Though nothing was proved against them yet they were not set free. The prison-house being a very miserable, crowded, and damp place, contagious typhoid fever broke out, and many of them being infected they were obliged to send home fourteen of the prisoners, of whom five died. Five others died in the prison, and the remaining seventeen men were sent to Kharput to be imprisoned there. These have not yet been put upon their trial.

In the prison of Egin, No. 25, two men were summoned from Constantinople some ten months since and thrown into prison without being tried.

In the prison of Khozat, No. 26 was accused of having in his possession a book which was considered seditious. He was first condemned to death, then to incarceration for three years. He completed his term of punishment nine months ago, but is still in prison.

The total number in the prisons of Mamuret-ul-Aziz is, at this day, fifty-six men,

including one priest, besides others that may be found in Egin, Arabkir, Malatea, and Khozat, about whom no information has yet been obtained.

Five respectable men were summoned three years ago from Arabkir to Kharput, and thence sent to Castamouni as exiles without any apparent reason. Soon after reaching their destination one of them died, and another, it is said, lost his mind.

Besides those now in prison a large number of Armenians were arrested and incarcerated as political offenders. After being imprisoned from three months to two years they were tried and acquitted. Among them there were three or four priests.

The number of those who have undergone the term of punishment and been released is eleven.

Those who died in prison or soon after their release are fourteen.

(Signed) E. BOYAJIAN.

No. 154.

Mr. Barrington to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 132.)

Vienna, April 30, 1895.

My Lord,

AT an interview which I had with Count Kálnoky I mentioned the rumour, which had reached your Lordship from Batoum, of a revolutionary movement being on foot among the Armenians, and I communicated to him the substance of the telegram, No. 3, addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador on the 22nd instant, in which allusion is made to the collection of funds in aid of this movement, and also to a reported supply of arms awaiting shipment at Trieste for its execution.

His Excellency said he could not attach any credit to the imminence or practicability of any such scheme, and he was in possession of no news tending to confirm it, and he seemed most doubtful of either the requisite funds or organization being in existence for carrying it out.

Nothing, so far as is known here, has been heard of the supposed storage of arms at Trieste, and the possibility suggests itself of the idea of this reputed supply having arisen from the fact getting abroad that certain consignments of arms, of which the destination was unknown, but which were put on board two English steamers, were lying at that port at the beginning of February last.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WILLIAM A. C. BARRINGTON.

No. 155.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 171.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 6, 1895, 3·10 P.M.*

IN an audience which he had with the Sultan yesterday the Austrian Ambassador gave unofficial advice to His Majesty counselling him to accept the proposals of the three Powers, and so arrive at a speedy understanding in regard to the Armenian question, and prevent it from becoming a European one.

Should a Conference on the Treaty of Berlin be summoned, all the Signatories would, he said, have to be represented, and this Conference might lead to further undesirable consequences.

The Sultan's reply conveyed the impression that he was not unfavourably disposed to the views of the Ambassador.

No. 155*.

The Marquess of Dufferin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 6.)

(No. 20.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Paris, May 6, 1895.*

I THIS morning laid before Minister for Foreign Affairs the substance of your Lordship's telegram No. 49 as to the Armenian reforms, after giving him a brief explanation of the modifications in the scheme desired by Her Majesty's Government.

M. Hanotaux replied that he would at once communicate what I had said telegraphically to M. Cambon, who had his entire confidence in this affair. He also expressed a hope of a speedy and satisfactory solution of the question.

No. 156.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 40.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 6, 1895.*

I HAVE repeated to you the instructions which I sent to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and St. Petersburgh on learning from your Excellency's telegram No. 164 of the 3rd instant that your French and Russian colleagues could not support the modifications which Her Majesty's Government wished to introduce into the scheme of Armenian reforms.

Your Excellency is authorized to concert with your colleagues for the immediate presentation of the scheme to the Sultan and the Porte as soon as the French and Russian Governments have agreed to the insertion of the proviso that the selection of the High Commissioner shall be approved by the Powers.

No. 157.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 171.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 6, 1895.*

I HAVE read with interest Mr. Boyajian's Report of the 26th March, inclosed in your Excellency's despatch No. 244 of the 19th ultimo, relative to the language held by the Sheikh of Zilan, when at Diarbekir, on the Armenian question, and the generally hostile attitude of the Turks towards the Christians in that city.

The representation which you made to the Porte on the subject, as reported in your telegram No. 110 of the 26th March, is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

I understand that the Sheikh is now at Moosh, whither he was brought for examination before the Commission of Inquiry, but it would be desirable that you should obtain some assurance from the Turkish Government that he will not for the present be allowed to return to Diarbekir.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 158.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 173.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, May 6, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 260 of the 24th ultimo, inclosing copies of Consular Reports on the disturbed state of the districts of Sidon and Latakia, and I approve your Excellency's intention to recommend to the Porte the adoption of energetic measures with a view to preventing a disturbance of the public peace in those provinces.

I am, &c.

(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 159.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 7.)

(No. 54.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, May 7, 1895.*

PRINCE LOBANOFF, on my communicating to him the substance of your Lordship's telegram No. 75 of the 4th instant, informed me that he was awaiting a report on the subject from M. de Nélidoff, adding that the French Ambassador had also spoken to him in the same sense about the matter. His Excellency has, I gathered, little hope that the scheme of reforms will be successful, but he is inclined to leave the question in the hands of the Ambassadors.

No. 160.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 180.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 7, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 165 of the 4th instant, informing me of the instructions sent to the foreign Delegates at Moush in regard to the proposed visit of the Sassoon Commission to Gholié-Guzan, and the inquiry into the alleged intimidation of the witness Hebo, of Shenik.

I approve the terms of the message in question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 161.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 8.)

(No 55.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, May 8, 1895.*

I AM informed by Prince Lobanoff, with reference to the contents of your Lordship's telegram No. 75 of the 4th May, that he has telegraphed to M. de Nélidoff authorizing the insertion in the scheme of Armenian reforms of the proviso that the selection of the High Commissioner shall be subject to the approval of the three Powers.

No. 162.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 8.)

(No. 172.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 8, 1895, 5 P.M.*

THE Turkish Ambassador in London has informed the Porte that the "Daily News" has published a letter from Mr. Schwann, which gives the details of our proposals, and which Her Majesty's Government are supposed to have communicated to the Anglo-Armenian Committee.

My colleagues ask me to find out what has happened, as the Porte have complained bitterly of the proposals not having been communicated here before this announcement was made.

No. 163.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 9.)

(No. 173.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 9, 1895, 5·40 P.M.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 40 of the 6th and Nos. 41 and 42 of the 7th instant, I have the honour to state that the French and Russian Governments have instructed their Ambassadors here to insert in the project of reforms the stipulation by which the choice of the High Commissioner's appointment is subject to the assent of the Powers.

We have decided to present the proposal to the Sultan on the 11th and to the Porte on the 13th.

No. 164.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 41.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 9, 1895.*

YOUR Excellency will have learnt from Sir F. Lascelles' telegram No. 55 of yesterday, repeated to you in my telegram No. 43 of to-day, that the Russian Government have agreed to insert in the scheme of Armenian reforms to be presented to the Sultan, a proviso that the selection of the High Commissioner shall be approved by the Powers.

As the French Government have given their Representative full discretion in regard to the adoption of the proviso, I presume that you will be able to arrange for presenting the scheme of reforms to the Porte immediately.

No. 165.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 45.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 9, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 172 of yesterday.

I authorize you to assure the Porte and your colleagues that the scheme of Armenian reforms has been kept strictly confidential, so far as Her Majesty's Government are concerned, and that neither Mr. Schwann nor any other member of the Anglo-Armenian Committee has received any communication from them on the subject.

Mr. Schwann himself describes his statements, which are very general, as founded on conjecture. They are incorrect in several particulars, although in others they are pretty near the truth; but, considering the extent to which the subject has been discussed, this is not surprising.

No. 166.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 11.)

(No. 174.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 11, 1895, 5 P.M.*

THE three Dragomans presented the reforms this afternoon to the First Secretary of the Sultan. They also communicated a joint instruction from their Ambassadors, dwelling on the necessity of the reforms being accepted, and asking for a reply at an early date.

No. 167.

Sir M. Durand to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 31.)
My Lord, *Tehran, April 9, 1895.*

IN continuation of my despatch No. 20 of the 11th March last, I have the honour to forward some further reports by Mr. Paton regarding the alleged massacres of Armenians in Turkish territory.

As reported in my telegram of to-day's date, there seems to be no likelihood of his obtaining any more information on the subject, and I have authorized his return to Tabriz.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. M. DURAND.

Inclosure 1 in No. 167.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Dear Mr. Wood, *Khoi, March 8, 1895.*

IN my letter of the 3rd March I told you I had just got word of a man from Moosh, and for that reason I remained in Haftawan another day (Monday).

On Monday morning I had an interview with the man Vartan Arayantz, whose evidence, I think, is fairly reliable. The man seemed to have suffered both mentally and physically from the effects of the scenes he had witnessed and the great privations he had suffered on his way to this country. The marks of the burns on him are painfully evident even after so many months. I heard of no other refugees in that district, and accordingly left Salmas for Khoi on Tuesday morning, and telegraphed you to that effect.

I arrived in Khoi on Tuesday afternoon, and at night had an interview with a man from Nornshen, a village about the middle of the northern shore of Lake Van. From his evidence I expected to get some useful information at Var, about an hour from Khoi, and, on Wednesday morning I proceeded to that place. Here I found that there were about twenty-five houses settled from different villages alla long the north coast of Lake Van, and one or two from the Bitlis direction. I interviewed a number of these men, and inclose specimens of the stories as told by some of them.

Unfortunately they are all of the poorest class, and little beyond the story of their own personal grievances could be got out of them; but I think a perusal of these narratives, and their description of the closing catastrophe, taken in conjuction with the tale I have already sent, and the story of Vartan Aroyantz, of Moosh, will show that the massacres of Sassoon and Moosh form only a part of a general and wide-spread movement against the Armenians, as the oft-repeated aggressions seem to have taken a more serious complexion just about the same time, or immediately on the back of the Sassoon and Moosh massacres, allowing for the gradual progression of the wave eastwards.

I found the best method of fixing the time of any occurrence was relatively to the appearance of the brilliant meteor seen about the 26th August, as being more in conformity with the Eastern method.

This was the time about which the Sassoon massacre was said to have taken place.

Most of these people appear to have seen the meteor.

From people such as these are, it is perhaps hardly to be expected one can fix occurrences with any great accuracy, but I found this answered better than any other method.

Over what extent of ground the movement may have gone may be difficult to arrive at—the fugitives are so scattered; but if anything like the number reported to have reached Russia be true, the movement must have extended far and wide.

The information I have sent up till now embraces the districts from the city of Moosh on the west, to the city of Ardish on the east, and practically from the River Mūrad on the north, to the Bitlis region on the south.

In fact, so general does the movement appear to have been, that it is difficult to believe that it was not an organized affair with Government sanction.

There are said to be 55,000 fugitives now in Russia; and as most of the villages are small, this number would represent a very considerable distribution.

From different sources, more or less reliable, I have heard that the number computed to have passed through Khoi alone must have reached something like 10,000.

They came in detachments of from 50 to 100 at a time, and their appearance, I am told, was pitiful in the extreme—half naked, sick, and dying.

It is said that perhaps one-third of the number died on the road. Word is said to have reached here that there are more on the way. Very few are thought to have escaped from Sassoon, and those who did were more likely to make their way to Russia, through the valley through which the River Murad flows.

From the stories I have heard from the fugitives I have seen, it strikes me that as the movement marched eastwards the carnage became less; perhaps the Sassoon and Moosh massacres beginning to leak out, causing the "moving spirit" to repress the actual butchery somewhat and leave the slower and perhaps more cruel but silent slayers —starvation and exposure—to work their direful ravages.

As they came eastwards, the primary object of the aggressors appeared to be to secure all the worldly possessions of those poor people, and then to render them homeless by burning their villages, and thus drive them into the mountains, where they could not expect to find shelter from the severities of the winter which was upon them, snow having already fallen in some places.

I have formed this opinion partly because, although there appears to have been people killed in each village, I think it was principally where they resisted or lingered, and in no case had any individual seen wholesale slaughter.

In some cases men said "they were killing all around," but when asked how many they saw killed the number was seldom large.

Again, while all the roads were closed to prevent them getting out of the country, the aggressors did not appear to pursue them into the mountains, being more intent on collecting booty.

Be this as it may, even if only a few were killed in each village, the number of small villages is so great that, when the number in each is added, the total slain cannot be inconsiderable.

I regret that no reliable estimate of this number is at hand, but I expect even the best computation would be largely conjecture.

Some estimate the number of villages destroyed in the Ardish district alone at about forty, but I shall endeavour to get more information on this point.

None of those interviewed could assign any cause for the outbreak against them, but all thought, when they heard of the same thing going on round about them, that it was really the object of the Sultan to exterminate them.

The men, as a rule, told their stories in a straightforward manner, and I hardly think any of them were capable of concocting a story without being tripped up.

Exaggeration might be the only thing that crept in, and all the stories, though told in different places, agree pretty much in the main.

The narratives sent now are collected from men in Var, Khoi, and Sayidabad (the last of which places I visited to-day), and those in the different places have not seen one another.

Var, where most of those fugitives have settled temporarily, is a small village of about forty Armenians and 120 Mussulman houses. It is a very poor village, and can ill afford the burden of this large influx.

The inhabitants being principally fruit growers and agriculturists have no work at present, and the new comers have just to beg in the villages round about till such time as they can procure work.

The Mussulmans in the village are giving much trouble and have been endeavouring to secure a more than usually pretty girl, and at one time nearly succeeded.

They have to keep her shut up and closely guarded. They object to these people living there, and wish to have them turned out.

Some short time ago a Vartabet came from Etchmiadzin on behalf of the Catholicos to endeavour to arrange for the settlement of 5,000 houses here, but no definite arrangement has been come to.

The Catholicos has sent an agent to distribute a little money among the people settled in Var, but it will only amount to a few krans each.

I have endeavoured to be as careful as possible about names and position of villages, but cannot guarantee accuracy in all cases, as although I have picked up a capital map of the district, it is hardly to be expected that all the small villages will be marked; almost all the more important ones are.

Until I hear from you with further instructions, I shall continue to endeavour to procure information from different villages, and, if possible, about different districts.

I have heard that there are some refugees from Akhlat in Pera—about an hour from here—and shall endeavour to see them.

It is thought there are a number from different districts in Maku, but I cannot vouch for the truth of this.

If it is wished that I should go there, I would require to take some guards and would be the better of introduction to the Governor.

However, if it is true that more fugitives are on their way here, something might be gained by remaining in Khoi.

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROBT. MOIR PATON.

P.S.—I am obliged to make two packets of the letter and inclosures.

R. M. P.

Inclosure 2 in No. 167.

Evidence of Vartan Aroyantz, Moosh.

I AM a native of Moosh city, and our family consisted of my father, mother, two brothers and two sisters, and eight uncles. My father was a farmer, and we all helped on the farm.

Our principal occupation was raising hay. My father had also seven cows, six oxen, and ten sheep.

During the harvest time of last year we saw the brilliant meteor, and a few days after this two Armenians from Sassoun warned us that there had been a massacre at that place and we had better prepare to defend ourselves, as they were sure to attack us. We made what little preparation we could, but had only four guns in our house.

About six days after we saw the meteor, the Kurds and zaptiehs, evidently from Sassoon, attacked our quarter. They said they had an order from the Sultan to destroy the Armenians.

In the course of the struggle one of my brothers killed four Kurds, then my brother was killed.

My father's throat was cut before my eyes, and my mother died from terror. There were no other women in the house.

They took me, bound me and threw me under a tree, where I was left for a time. They then returned and asked me to tell them where our valuables were concealed, but I knew of none and told them so.

They thereupon applied live charcoal to my wrists and abdomen (the marks are still painfully apparent), and very soon I fainted.

When I recovered from the swoon, they evidently thought I had lost my reason and left me. When I quite recovered my senses I saw all kinds of horrors going on around me. Women with child were ripped open and the fœtus taken out. Unmarried women, or those who were not pregnant, were carried to the church, which is close by our house, and after being outraged were slaughtered, so that the blood ran out of the church like water. Men were crucified by being placed against the wall and nails driven through their foreheads and hands.

I fled and hid myself in a hay-loft, where I remained for two days.

At night they set fire to many houses and fired upon them with cannon.

A Kurd, who had lived in our house, found me in the hay-loft, and by his assistance I escaped.

As I went I saw bodies lying about in heaps. I heard that ten thousand had been killed, but I can only say there was a very large number.

I heard that they pillaged the Vanek * of Karabet, some call it Gorobed, and dug up the grave of a Vartabed † buried there. The grave was covered by a marble slab, and they evidently thought treasure was buried there.

I also heard that they murdered the Vartabed and carried his body to the mountains, where the Armenians went and recovered it.

I came here by the south side of Lake Van, through Bitlis, and on to Khoshab, and from thence across the frontier through the mountains to Hasteran, Salmas. Most of my friends went to Russia.

The men engaged in the slaughter were Hamedia Kurds and zaptichs, who are mostly Kurds in this district.

Note by Mr. Paton.—This is all that could be got out of this man, who had evidently suffered severely, both bodily and mentally, from all he had passed through.

Inclosure 3 in No. 167.

Evidence of Gazar Irvasian, of Dzighak (about fifty houses of Armenians, in the region of Bitlis, about the middle of the Western Shore of Lake Van).

FOR four years back the Kurds have been harassing us and robbing us of our flocks, grain, and anything they could lay their hands on. They frequently violated our women and carried them off.

Our taxes had been raised recently. Mine had been increased from twenty-five Medjidiés to thirty. Although they were oppressive we paid them without a murmur.

Between twenty-five and thirty days after the meteor our village was attacked. There were regular soldiers in uniform and Kurds engaged. I recognized some of the Hasananli Kurds with their chief, Shavishi Issoo. Others were strangers to the district. We offered no resistance for we had no arms, but all who could escape fled.

As I went, besides the other booty they were carrying off, I saw them collecting the cattle and flocks into the church (Soorbkhack ‡) previous to driving them off.

I saw four men killed, and they were killing all around.

My cousin's wife was killed in my house.

They were brutally ill-treating the women and violating them. I possessed two horses, four buffaloes and four milch buffaloes and 154 sheep.

I can give no reason for the massacre. The villagers fled in all directions, but I believe most have gone to Kars, Erivan, &c.

I am the only one of the village who reached these parts, so far as I know. I lost my way on the mountains with my two children, a boy and a girl. We suffered great privations, and my children died on the way in consequence.

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* Cathedral.—C. G. W. † Archdeacon.—C. G. W.
‡ Of the Holy Cross.—C. G. W.

Inclosure 4 in No. 167.

Evidence of Karapet Garzariantz, Priest of Norashen.

IT is about four years since things became intolerable in this region.

Among other grievances, when regular soldiers passed through our village they quartered themselves upon us, taking just what they pleased. They killed our sheep and poultry for their use, ravished our women and committed sodomy on our youths.

The Kurds also round about would come down from time to time and carry off all they could lay hands on. They would come in batches of ten or twelve. We could not resist as we had no arms—Armenians not being allowed to carry them.

At one time two Kurds had been fighting and the one man killed the other. The relatives of the murdered man made this a pretext to claim blood money from the village, and they took all they could at that time.

The Kurd who committed this outrage was Mohammed, son of Mahmoud Agha.

About a month before I fled some Kurds caught me and kept me bound for three days, and demanded fifteen liras * for my release. This sum being forthcoming I was released, but I heard that Mahmoud Agha was displeased that I had been let off so cheaply.

Recently they increased the taxes to such an extent that it was quite impossible for us to pay them and subsist on what was left.

We began to hear of villages round about being attacked and destroyed. Among others, we heard of one called Beshnakomer, a little to the south-west of Norashen, being burnt. We heard that some children had been burned in the houses, and three women were violated and carried off. This was done by Tamoo, son of Hamza Agha, Ibishen Hamza, and Mahmoud, son of Farhad, three Kurdish chiefs of the Hamedia.

Immediately after this the attack was made upon our village. I was in the church at the time, and when I heard they were upon us I fled, taking my family with me. We went off from the church without entering our house again. All were fleeing, and I counted fifteen killed as I went, and they were killing all around.

The greater number of those engaged in the outrage were Hamedia, but there were also some regular soldiers. There were also Kurds from Alashkert, Moosh and Sarisoo districts. There might be about forty horsemen and thirty foot. There were Kurdish women also helping to carry off the plunder.

The Kurds had told us of the massacre at Sassoon, and said we were to be killed too; that it was the order of the Sultan.

Sometime before I fled I went to Rashid Beg, the Governor, and asked for protection. He telegraphed our complaint to Stamboul but got no reply, and he therefore concluded what was going on round about was with the Sultan's sanction. He seemed inclined to help but could do nothing. The Governor is of the Kurdish tribe, Abaghi, and has a Nestorian wife.

When we fled we had to take to the mountains, as all the roads had been closed to cut off our flight. There was much snow on the mountains, and many perished from exposure and want of food. We travelled by night and hid by day. We found out whether there were any Armenians in any villages we passed, and where there were, we sent two or three to beg for food.

In the villages a kind of reed grows, the roots of which we largely subsisted on.

The women's milk failed them from want of proper nourishment, and the children died in consequence.

The Yezidis found out we were passing and came and robbed us of what little we had left. My son, a boy of 17, was wounded by them, and died shortly after we arrived here.

The leaders were Tamar Pasha, Hussein Pasha, and Amin Pasha, leaders of the Haidernali and Adamali Kurds, and Dervish Agha of Calean town. This occurred between thirty and forty days after the brilliant meteor.

N.B.—There are about twenty houses from Norashen settled in Var, near Khoi. Almost all have had members of their families killed or lost on the road through exposure.

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* Lira = Turkish £.—C. G. W.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Inclosure 5 in No. 167.

Evidence of Haratoun, of Norashen.

THE Government began to increase taxation from 1 Medjedié on each adult to 3, and each sheep from 20 paras to 3 koroosh. This we objected to, as we were unable to pay it.

When we were sowing wheat in the autumn (about the end of September) we were attacked in the fields by Hamedia Kurds and Kurds from a distance unknown to me.

The Armenians fled in all directions, many being killed in the fields. I had two brothers killed. One escaped along with me, and two others fled in some other direction. I did not see much that took place as I fled at once.

There was much snow on the mountains, and I found my way to Boghazresen, and then on to Khoi.

On the road I found many fleeing in all directions.

Inclosure 6 in No. 167.

Evidence of Stephen, son of Michael, from Khorantz (forty Armenian houses, about two hours East of Adeljivaz).

ONE evening in May last year, towards sunset, Kasim Agha, son of Tamar Agha (or Pasha), and his brothers, and Kurds of their tribe to the number of about thirty horse and fifteen foot, came into the village and seized Akoub Agha, one of the rich men of the village, and demanded 200 liras. He said he had not this amount, and they bound him to a tree and illtreated him. His brother David came and pleaded with them, saying he could not find so much.

They killed David, and continued to beat Akoub, but at last when he found for them 50 liras they carried off his two daughters and let him go.

They then went to the house of Haratoun, son of Moukdouzi, and demanded 200 liras. He refused to give it, and they shot him.

They then demanded the money from his uncle Moukdouzi Hatchadoor, and threatened to kill him if the money was not paid.

He procured the money and they let him go.

They then came to my house, but I was out cutting hay. They found me in the field, and demanded my oxen. My brother was with me, and he pleaded for me, but they drove off the cattle. One of the men who did this died two months after.

His brother went to the Governor and said the Armenians had killed him, and my name was given as the murderer.

The Governor arrested me, and imprisoned me in Adiljivaz. After a month the Vali Pasha of Van paid a visit to that place, and my father went to him to intercede for me.

The Kurd tried to get his friends to prevent my release, but the local Governor being afraid released me, and gave me a paper* freeing me from all connection with the affair.

This Kurd still continues to trouble me, and on one occasion he was the means of frightening my two children to death.

As we could get no peace my father and I realized our property, which brought us in 300 liras. This also was robbed from us by the Kurds, and we just escaped with our lives. We fled, and I had to leave my wife behind.

On the way here we were caught in a heavy snowstorm, and my father succumbed to the exposure. He died in the Valley of Bilarjick, on the other side of Kotur.

What has taken place in the village since we left I do not know.

Sometime before I left one of my uncles (Abraham) went to get some hay, and he was accosted by five of Amin Pasha's men, who ordered him to unyoke the oxen. On refusing to do this they struck him with a sword and crippled him for life.

He had two boys with him, and one died from fright. Amin Pasha sent word that if 30 gold liras were sent him he would deliver the oxen. My uncle sold a field, and obtained 30 liras to buy back his oxen (sixteen in all had been taken).

Amin Pasha took the liras, and then said the oxen were not with him, but he would send some men with my uncle to the person who had them, and they would give them up to him.

My uncle went and obtained the oxen, and started on his way home, but Amin's men overtook him, and again seized the animals.

After this my uncle fled to Russia.

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* This document was shown to Mr. Paton.—C. G. W.

Inclosure 7 in No. 167.

Evidence of Arakya Haratounian, of Arjza (a place half-way between Adiljivaz and Ardish, on the peninsula, consisting of about forty Armenian houses).

IN autumn last Abraham Agha at three different times, at intervals of about ten days, came down and plundered the village.

The first time he carried off all our flocks, and made the people fill sacks with grain and carry them on their backs to his quarters.

The second time he plundered their houses, robbing them of everything, and the third time he carried off two girls and killed three men.

When these men were killed the people fled in all directions.

They used the church to keep the flocks in before they were carried off, and the last time he came the women were taken to the church in batches and violated. They had on a former occasion used the church for the same purpose, and he had robbed the church three times previously.

Before the massacre at Sassoon had taken place Hussein Pasha, who lived near our village, sometimes brought ten women from that place.

After he had finished with them he handed them over to his servants.

When the Kurds came the last time they said they had killed 3,000 at Sassoon. This would be a month after the meteor was seen.

There are two houses from Arjza here.

On the road here my brother Hatchatoor died from exposure. At Haspistan I was caught and robbed of my last six gold pieces.

Inclosure 8 in No. 167.

Evidence of Sarginz Muradian, of Ardish, or Arjish (a place six hours east of Norashen, containing about 200 Armenian houses and some 500 Turks).

ABOUT three or four months ago the Kurds came down on us and carried off all our flocks to the mountains.

The Governor tried to protect us with the few soldiers he had, but without success. At this time the Kurds killed Haratoun, son of Kasar Agha. When he was killed, most of the people fled to the mountains, but next day they tried to follow up the Kurds through the Eilandarase Valley to recover their cattle, but could not find them. They returned and settled down again.

The Governor then demanded their taxes. They told him he knew their flocks had been carried off, and they had nothing to give, but if these were returned they would sell them and pay the taxes.

Ten men were then arrested and cast into prison, all their belongings being seized in the name of taxes.

They would take things worth a toman and estimate it at half its value, and so on, till nothing was left. They cast me into prison, where I was kept for fifty days.

On being released I found they had carried off my wife and I have not seen her since. I remained all day, and at night fled, leaving my children (aged 7 and 5 years) as I had no means of carrying them.

I heard that if I attempted to escape by the usual roads I would be stopped, so I took to the mountains and bye-roads.

I suffered severely on the road, my feet being frostbitten, and I suffered otherwise.

I obtained bread at the Armenian villages on the way, and advanced by night.

While in prison I was told by a fellow prisoner, from Madavank, which has about thirty Armenian houses, and is in the Akhlat district, half way between Lake Van and Lake Nazur, that Hussien Pasha, of Patinos, and Amin Pasha went to the house of the Malek* sometime in the autumn and stayed one night, killing his sheep, &c., for their food.

In the morning they went to the Governor and said he had tried to poison them, and he was arrested and put in prison. He was a very rich man, and they seized all he possessed to the extent of about 2,000 pieces of gold and 500 sheep.

* Bishop.—C. G. W.

They then tore down the whole village, after lifting everything, and left nothing standing.

Two girls and one married woman were carried off, one man killed, and the villagers scattered.

Inclosure 9 in No. 167.

Evidence of Astwaschatour Gregoriantz, of Adiljevas.

IN the summer of last year, while I was cutting hay in a field owned by me in Arinsküss, a village about a day east of Adiljivaz, consisting of about forty Armenian houses, Kasim Agha, son of Tamar Pasha, came into the village with fifty horsemen and demanded from Boghos Aga (Head of the village) a sum of money.

Boghos refused it, and they killed him. They then looted his house, carried off his flocks and his goods, as well as some 200 liras.

They then attacked the rest of the village, carrying off the flocks, and, after looting the houses, they tore them down and carried off the timber.

The people all fled and left the robbers to do as they pleased.

I believe most of the villagers set out for Russia. I saw no woman abused here.

A little later I was in the village of Karakashesh (about two hours east of Adiljidas, and containing some thirty Armenian houses), when about thirty horsemen and twenty foot of the Haideranh Kurdish tribe, under the leadership of Tamar Pasha and Abrahim Agha, entered the village and, after robbing the church (Gothgota or Golgotha) and plundering the village, they tore down the houses, secured the timber, and carried off fifteen maidens.

Most of the people of this village are believed to have gone to Russia.

Many of the women with child miscarried from the result of fear, but this is a very common thing, as they are in constant fear of their lives.

In the autumn of last year a Kurd accused me of having committed adultery with his wife. He came and said: "If you all turn Mussulmen I shall save you." Eight of my household became Mussulmen from fear.

My uncle was imprisoned and ultimately killed. My son (15 years old) was imprisoned by a Kurd named Mohammed, son of Farhad, of Bathotz, and was ultimately killed by him.

When eight of my family turned Mahommedan they released me. I remained a day in the village, but as Tamar Pasha and Mohammed Aglia, son of Mahmoud, were plundering the village in the same way as the two other villages I mentioned, I fled. They were carrying off the sheep and goods, and were making a fold from the stones of the church which they had torn down.

They were violating women here, and two men were killed before I escaped.

I saw no more, but fled.

Inclosure 10 in No. 167.

Evidence of Gaspar Boghosian, of Ardish (who describes it as a place of about 500 Armenian houses and 300 Turkish).

FOR about four years the Hamedia Kurds have been harassing us. During those four years they would come down and carry off the sheep or oxen, and from time to time our young women.

Things went on this way till last autumn, about a month after the appearance of the brilliant meteor, when Mahmoud Effendi, the Governor, called us one day and said we had better flee, as the Sultan had issued orders to kill or destroy us, and he was powerless to save us.

I do not know whether he received any telegram to that effect or not, but about a week after this the Hamedia and other Kurds and soldiers came down upon us. They came in the evening, and robbed and stripped us of everything.

There was only one man killed that night, and when the Kurds left to carry off

their plunder the villagers almost all fled. Six girls were carried off and two good-looking boys.

There would be about forty horsemen, and before beginning to plunder they sat down and ate, then violated many women. They took away about 3,000 sheep, 40 oxen, 10 buffaloes, and 15 horses.

About seven houses fled to surrounding villages, and the remainder scattered, some going to Russia and a few coming here.

Before this happened we heard that about forty villages had been served in the same way. The Kurds themselves told us that the Sultan had given orders by telegraph to Amin Pasha, Hussein Pasha, and Tamar Pasha to destroy us.

After they had taken out the timber they set fire to the houses. My wife died on the way here from fright when she heard a report that the Kurds were following us. My little boy also died on the other side of Kotur. I came by Berkri, Boghas Kesan, and Kotur. I travelled by night, and obtained food at Armenian villages on the road, or ate the roots by the wayside.

Inclosure 11 in No. 167.

Evidence of Bedros Ivasian, of Armizank (in the district of Ardish, consisting of about thirty Armenian houses, about one hour north of Narashen).

SINCE the time of the Turco-Russian war the Hamedia Kurds have been a trouble in the district, they having retained their arms since that time, while the Armenians were disarmed.

It is only during the last four years, however, that life had become intolerable from the more frequent raids and outrages of these men. Among other things, besides the usual robberies, they would come and compel men to cut grass, put it into sacks, and carry it wherever they wanted.

If any refused, they would heat shovels or any iron instrument, and apply them to their bodies.

Recently our taxes had been raised from 1½ to 6 Medjidiés per head, but we paid them without murmur.

The Kurds have so ill-treated me from time to time, and having at last robbed me of almost everything, I fled to Ardish between five and six months ago, fearing that as I had nothing left with which to satisfy their demands, they would at last carry out their repeated threats of cutting my throat.

I am getting up in years, and their ill-treatment has largely helped to bring about my present illness.*

Some time after I went to Ardish I heard that villages between this place and Adiljivas were being burned to the ground, and their inhabitants either slain or driven forth, and soon after I heard that my own village was burned down, and my nephew killed. Villagers told me that about thirty Hamedia horsemen had come into the village, violated the women, robbed the church, tore it down, and, after pillaging the villages, set fire to the houses and left nothing standing.

A Kurd in Ardish had made me work for him like a slave, but at this time I escaped and joined about 100 people who were fleeing from all parts.

Many were from Moush, but they all made for Russia. Two or three of us got separated from the others, and a Kurd offered to assist us to escape. By his assistance we got well on the way here, he finding shelter and food for us, but finally he robbed us of all we had and left us. It was reported by every one that the Hamedia men said their orders from the Sultan were to cut them up and treat them like sheep.

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* The man looked very feeble and ill.—R. M. P.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

Inclosure 12 in No. 167.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Khoi, March 9, 1895.

Dear Mr. Wood,

I HAVE just received your telegram giving me permission to go to any place where I have reason to believe fugitives have taken refuge.

I am told there are some twenty houses settled in Maku from the Alashkert district, and that there may be refugees from other parts.

While I am rather in despair about finding people from Sassoon and Moush, I think, as it is perfectly evident that the movement has been general, and not confined to these districts alone, it would be well to go there and see some of these people, and of course there is always the chance of there being some from Sassoon.

I think I can go to Maku perfectly well without special introductions, but shall take some guards with me. I shall therefore exhaust the villages round about here first, and then leave for Maku, say, on Tuesday morning, and by the time I get back to Khoi perhaps other refugees may have arrived in this place.

I shall telegraph the name of the weekday on which I start (*e.g.*, if I start on Tuesday I shall telegraph "Dooshemba").

The more I think of all I have heard from the refugees, the more convinced am I that the systematic plundering and oppression in general culminated in a general movement last autumn, with Government sanction, the flight being general from all quarters about that time.

The reason of their being more massacred in Sassoon and Moush probably was that in those places, whether from their natural situation or because of the Armenians having a few arms, more resistance was offered.

The people in most of the villages from which I have seen refugees had nothing to protect themselves with, and there being so little resistance probably accounts for the comparatively smaller number slain.

Believe me, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

Inclosure 13 in No. 167.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Khoi, March 10, 1895.

Dear Mr. Wood,

TO-DAY I went to Peru, which is about three-quarters of an-hour's ride from Khoi. There are two families of refugees there, but I found the men had gone into Khoi. After waiting some time, when I saw they were not likely to come back soon, I thought it might not be lost time to interview the wives of these men, and I inclose their stories.

When I returned to Khoi I had an interview with an Armenian merchant who came from Van about forty days ago. At first he seemed a little afraid to tell anything, but at last I got out of him all he professed to know.

He says that about seven months ago a rumour was spread in Van that the Armenians of Sassoon and Moush were in revolt, and all the soldiers from round about were collected in Van and marched off to these places.

They returned somewhere about two months or so after, but little was known in Van about what had taken place.

However, the Vali of Van had a consultation with the Russian Representative there, and soon after a paper was drawn up by the Vali, saying that there had been a revolt among the Armenians of Sassoon and Moush, and that the subscribers were pleased that the Vali had quelled it. This, many Armenians were forced to sign.

He could not give the name of the leader of the Van contingent, but Mouchir Pasha was generally acknowledged to be the head of the whole affair.

He also says there are about 300 Armenians imprisoned in Van, and that while some are justly so, the majority are there on fictitious accusations.

They send people into the Armenian houses, and if a penknife or anything of the sort is found on the premises the occupants are imprisoned.

Men are generally kept in prison from one to three years, and so badly are they treated while there, that they generally come out only to die shortly after. He has seen them frequently carried from prison, too weak to walk.

He tells of a case at Ardamet where a Mussulman was found shot dead, and lying on the top of an Armenian grave. The Armenians were at once blamed, and the Vali arrested a number, who were still in prison when he left.

The bullet was extracted from the body, and found to be one used in the weapons of the regular Turkish soldiers.

He also says he saw twenty men brought in from Boghazkesen as rebels, but he believes the place had been sacked like other villages, and the men were falsely accused as they, like almost all other villagers, have no means with which to maintain a rebellion.

This man's story seems to heighten the possibility of the view I had formed that the sacking of these villages all along the north coast of Van were a continuation of the Sassoon and Moush outrages, as it is not unlikely those were committed as the soldiers returned to Van on their own districts.

It is said that Mouchir Pasha was accompanying the army round that way, but hearing the English Consul was on the road to Sassoon he retired.

This man says that the irregular soldiery are hardly distinguishable from the other Kurds, so that those villagers very often did not know the difference.

Of course, there are always two sides to a story, and I can only get one here, but my impression is that while there is a class of Armenian which may be responsible for a good deal that occurs, unfortunately, the evil has fallen on the shoulders of the innocent, as those people I saw who have suffered are poor peasants, more or less ignorant, but apparently quiet, harmless creatures, not having the means, even if they had the will, wherewith to maintain a rebellion.

I hear the refugees in Van have gone on to Russia to-day, much to the displeasure of the agent who was sent to distribute money to them (about 5 or 6 krans each).

He did his utmost, by persuasion and threats, to dissuade them, but, I believe, without success.

I am leaving for Maku to-morrow as I have exhausted this place. I can get no definite news about the refugees there except that there are some known to be there from Alashkert, but there is also a chance, as Maku is on one of the two roads which, I am told, people from the Sassoon and Moush direction making for Russia must take, so that I should at least get news of them there.

I am told that eight refugees from Sassoon are known to have reached Tiflis, and that there was one in Salmas about three months ago. More definite information is not known here.

This will be posted here on the 15th, and I do not think I can be back here from Maku till about eight or ten days after to-morrow.

The horses are so dreadfully bad, and the roads likewise, that good going is out of the question.

When I return I shall telegraph ("sad hundred") if I have seen any from Sassoon. If I get news that there is reason to believe there are some in Erivan, I shall telegraph ("du 2").

If I am wanted to go to Erivan, if you telegraph ("dah 10"), I shall go on there from Khoi.

If I am wanted to return to Tabriz, I would understand if you telegraph ("see 30").

I am, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

Inclosure 14 in No. 167.

Testimony of Sarah, wife of Boghos Asheatoorian.

WE left our village of Carmooj, which has about thirty Armenian houses and is close to Arblat, a little more than a year ago and went to Ardish, and I was there when it was plundered.

When our village of Carmooj was plundered, at the time I fled from it, there were many men killed.

The Kurds came to my brother-in-law's house and when they had entered they saw a child in the cradle; they upset the cradle and smothered the child.

They then cut it up, roasted it and forced the mother to eat part of it. I was present and witnessed this.

They stripped all the women naked, but violated none in this house.

They, however, carried off our girls and we have never seen them again.

Many women and children died from fear. Not less than twenty girls and a few women were carried off a short time before, and they were found afterwards, dead after being violated.

A woman went screaming along the street and they beat her to a jelly.

Some Armenians carried her off and having killed a sheep put her in the warm skin, but she died.

Four sick persons were dragged into the street and thrown on the snow, and no one was allowed to touch them. They were all frozen to death.

They finished by burning up everything, and not a stick was left standing.

Hamid Pasha was the leader in all this. He belongs to the Selok tribe.

There were also Hasanali Kurds.

Habib Agha one time came with the Daghistan and Tchatchan tribes and killed four men and carried off many things.

At another time a number of Kurds came, and, after eating, they carried off a child 4 years old, and having abused her, threw her into the mill-lade.

They also drowned ten children in large jars of pickled turnips. I saw those myself, and we had great difficulty in getting them buried.

The Government officials said there was no use complaining as they could not cope with the Kurds.

When I was in Ardish the Kurds came suddenly upon us in large numbers. I do not know what tribe they belonged to, as I was a stranger in the district.

When first they came they demanded something to eat, which was given them.

They then demanded sugar, but we had none as it had been carried off by Kurds a short time before.

When they could not get sugar they made this an excuse for a quarrel, and killed three or four men. They then began to plunder the place, and loaded the villagers with their own goods and forced them to convey them a long way into the mountains to their retreat.

At this time there was great confusion, families all got mixed up, children were lost and never seen again, and each one sought to save his own life in flight. I saw them burn piles of hay and wheat, and I fled.

I lost two children, through exposure, on the road here.

Inclosure 15 in No. 107.

Testimony of Nobar, wife of Alevan, son of Toros, Akhlat.

THERE are perhaps 2,000 Kurdish and 30 Armenian families here.

It is a Government centre, and there are always Turkish soldiers there. It is about three years since we were first troubled by the Kurds, but we suffered from the Government officials and soldiers also.

About a year and a-half ago a Turkish soldier deserted, and we had been acquainted with this man for sometime previously.

When he deserted he came to our house and lived with us. We did not know that he had deserted, and having known him before thought nothing of his staying with us.

A day or two after he arrived a number of soldiers came to the house, and when they found the deserter there they arrested him, and blamed us for having concealed him.

We told them we did not know he had deserted, but they would not listen to us, and they then attacked my sons and killed two of them, Manook and Galib, and carried the two others away with them, and although I have searched for them I have never set eyes on them since.

My husband fainted, and was out of his senses for seven months afterwards, during which time he lost his power of speech. He is better now.

At that time the soldiers carried away with them everything worth lifting.

About twenty days before this the Kurds went to a neighbour's house (Hatchatoor), and demanded him to give up his wife, who was a beautiful woman. He pleaded with them offering them everything, and that he would be their slave if they would only spare his wife. They persisted, and he refused to give her up.

Then they took him, tied a rope round his neck and choked him, and then carried off his wife.

The Armenians reburied the body of this man seven times, and as many times it was dug up.

The eighth time it was allowed to rest. When the Armenians complained to the Governor he said, "There is no use making such a fuss, as I can do nothing against Government soldiers."

About one month before this event a Government tax collector went to the house of Khosdi Bedrosian, where there was a little girl between 1½ and 2 years old. He showed her some beads he had, and having enticed her away he violated the child.

They took the child and showed it to the Governor, who said much the same as in the last case. The child recovered.

A man, Matiros, the white beard of the village, went to complain about something to the Governor. When he was returning the Kurds killed him, and cut him in pieces. His horse returning alone they went to seek him, and found him thus. They salted the body and carried it to the church, where it was kept for three weeks before they could prevail on the officials to give them orders for burial.

Mousa Beg of Moush one time carried off a number of girls. Sometime afterwards we found out where they were, and tried to get them back but without success, and he said they were sent to Stamboul.

He blamed a young Armenian of Aradis, who could write, for telling where they were, and giving information about him.

He took this youth and burnt his hands off, then his feet, and finally his back, when he died.

It is about a year since I went to Adiljivas and then to Ardish.

When I was in Ardish a tribe of Kurds fought with the Kurds of the place, and one man was killed.

The strange tribe claimed blood money, and the Armenians were forced to pay it. At this time they plundered the houses, and through fear many of us fled, but this was before the place was finally burned.

Inclosure 16 in No. 107.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Dear Mr. Wood, *Khoi, March 21, 1895.*

I RETURNED here yesterday early in the afternoon, and at once sent a telegram to the telegraph-office, but the messenger was told that there were no officials present, as it was a holiday, and no business would be transacted that day. I understand they were celebrating the anniversary of the death of Ali. I accordingly sent the telegram this morning, and they said it would be sent off at once.

I telegraphed to the effect that I was informed that, beyond doubt, there would be refugees from Sassoon found at Erivan.

The words used were "Albetta migooyaud du," the last word being the one I said I would telegraph in the event of my getting information that there is reason to believe there are some refugees in Erivan from Sassoon.

After considerable difficulty in finding a Charvadar who was willing to risk the journey (as the general assertion was that you might as well have your throat cut before you started), I set out last Tuesday morning for Maku, the Charvadar undertaking to make the journey in three days.

When we started it was snowing pretty heavily, and by the time we reached the Hamzean Gadook or Pass there was quite a snow-storm, which made the going difficult. None of our horses were what you could call good, but the Charvadar's were specially bad, and he was thus occasionally left a little behind.

Shortly before reaching the pass we were met by six men, and it appears that they (taking advantage of a turning in the mountain path and our being a little in front and concealed from view) seized the Charvadar's horse by the bridle and demanded some money, and it was only on his shouting to us that they desisted and made off.

We, however, reached our first destination, Karaziadin, by sunset, without further incident.

Next morning we started for Shot, and on the third afternoon we reached Maku in safety. On the whole, we found the road very good, and could easily have done the journey on good horses in two days.

It was not long before I found there was nothing to be done there, all the fugitives (among whom were several from Sassoon) having passed on to Russia.

There was only one man who could give any personal testimony, and I inclose the little he had to say.

This district (Alashgert) has evidently suffered much in the same way as the other districts from which I found refugees, only the people seem to have left before any general organized movement had taken place against them.

I found out, on arrival, that the man from whom I had hoped to get some information, viz., Kashish Vartabed Danyan, had left some time ago for the Vank of Karakilessa (or as some call it Tatacos Arakiel, and others Shimoon Pagaubar); I therefore determined to go on there as quickly as possible, and accordingly left on Saturday morning for that place.

We took the road known as the "low road," which, however, is essentially a mountain one, going by the Gooyi Gadook (or blue pass), the Enak Gadook (or cow pass), and the Yehlli Gadook (or windy pass).

The principal villages or hamlets passed being Sheikhagan and Akdash.

It snowed almost all day, and between Akdash and Karakilessa (a distance of about 6 miles partly along a steep mountain side), the snow was frequently up to the horses' girths. It was therefore dark before we actually reached the Vank, which was conspicuously seen in its solitariness from the slopes we were descending in the fast-fading daylight.

I was very hospitably received and entertained in this—which is claimed to be—the most ancient Vank of the Armenians, by the low Vartabeds, now its sole occupants.

Kashish informed me that he had left Etchmiadzin three months ago, at the instance of the Catholicos, to arrange several matters: one matter being to endeavour to secure redress for the pillaging, by the Kurds, of the small number of houses near the Vank; and another, an attempt to arrange with the Persian Government for the establishing of an Armenian Colony in the neighbourhood of the Vank.

As yet, he has not been able to do much in the former matter; but he tells me that the Shah has promised to agree to the latter proposition, and undertakes to protect them from the Kurds. This, however, he wished to keep very quiet, as the Russians won't allow any of those who have gone into their territory to leave it again till the spring, and then they will only give permission for them to return to Turkey if they leave.

I am led to understand that the Russian's object is to send them in small numbers to different places in Siberia, evidently hoping that this disintegration will lead to the destruction of national sentiment, and abandonment of their original faith, and at the same time contribute to the population of sparsly inhabited regions.

The Armenians, on the other hand, are anxious to prevent this, as they would rather suffer a little persecution than have their national sentiment and religion destroyed.

The Vartabed claims that there was in the diocese of this Vank (Karakilessa) at one time a very large Armenian population, of which 32,000 went over to Russia in 1828 when that Power retired from these parts, and that the ruins of the ancient city of Shavarshan (about an hour's distance from Karakilessa) are those of the first Armenian city ever founded, the Vank itself being founded in 40 A.D. by the Apostle Thaddeus (Tatacos); of course, they have little but tradition to support these latter statements, but they have, in the Vank archives, part of an Armenian document, which he showed me, and it is written in a character evidently in use before the present chirography, which has been in use about 1,500 years. This was found in a sarcophagus near by, which is claimed to have held the remains of Tatacos, and which were transferred to a small chamber in the Vank.

The refugees are settling themselves all round about Erivan and Etchmiadzin, and from what I have heard, they will be loath to quit a country which is ruled by a Christian Sovereign.

The Vartabed, however, assures me there will be no difficulty with the people themselves, as they are prepared to abide by the decree of the Catholicos.

This personage is at present in St. Petersburgh, partly, no doubt, on this very business.

The Vartabed had seen many refugees from Sassoon himself, and says all the information wanted could certainly readily be got at and around Etchmiadzin (which is about an hour from Erivan), as there are many from the Sassoon villages which were not totally destroyed.

He did not think it possible to get anything like an absolutely correct estimate of the number killed, as in no village was the number of inhabitants accurately known, but said that the very lowest estimate must be very considerable, as so many villages were totally destroyed.

Detailed information he could not give, but was quite sure I could get many facts in the way he had suggested. On the assumption of my going to Erivan he furnished me

with a confidential letter to the Director at Etchmiadzin, through whom I would find more readily what I wanted.

Two men from Bitlis had just arrived in Karakilessa, whom I saw, and whose testimony I have recorded as inclosed.

They go far, especially the evidence of Bedros, to confirm what I have already learned and reported to you, as well as supporting my surmise about the pillaging, &c., of these villages on the north of Lake Van being connected with the Sassoon and Moush movement.

After leaving the Vank on Monday morning we made for Karaziadin, going by Abhasskendi, Garangoo, and Salta. When we left the Vank it was snowing hard, and there was every appearance of a severe storm. As it turned out, hours after we left Abhasskendi the guides (two) suddenly stopped and told us they had lost their reckoning entirely, as they had missed the road about two hours ago, not being able to see 10 yards in front of them, and ever since had been trying in vain to find a village which they knew ought to be somewhere about.

At this time we were in the midst of a blinding, driving storm, and there was nothing for it but to insist on the guides continuing their search, for to have attempted to retrace our steps to Abhasskendi would probably have ended in failure, as the snow was coming down and drifting in such a way as to quickly obliterate our traces. At this time one could more readily appreciate what those miserable refugees must have gone through, as, no doubt, on this very chain of mountains some must have perished, and it is not surprising that so few children survived the journey.

After continuing the search for some time they at last struck the village they had expected to find, but so far was it out of our route that when we reached the next village (the road to which they knew, after finding the one they had been looking for) we found we were only about a farsakh from Karakilessa, having left it between four and five hours before. The storm still continued with unabated fury, but we struggled on (much to the disgust of the guides), making very little headway, especially between Garangoo and Alimardan. Here for about 2 miles the snow again was so deep that it was not possible to sit on the horses, so we had to dismount and pull the horses along as best we could, not making more than about half a farsakh in about one hour and a-half.

From Alimardan onwards to Karazeadin we went very well, but had lost so much time on the first part of the journey that it was long after dark before we reached Karazeadin, having spent about twelve hours on the journey.

From Karazeadin we returned to Khoi by the same road we had taken in going to Maku, reaching Khoi on Tuesday afternoon.

On Tuesday afternoon I had an interview with a man from Boghazkesen, whose story bears out what was mentioned by the man from Van. I inclose his evidence.

With the exception of one other man, I don't think any more refugees have passed through here since I left. I have also news from Salmas that there is no word of any others having reached there.

I am informed that the Russian Consul-General in Tabriz has told his Agent in Salmas to send any refugees to him at Tabriz, but I know that he had heard nothing of the men I saw there.

I think you can now rest assured that there are no refugees from Sassoon to be found in Persian territory, and if the Government wish the testimony of men from that part it can only be had in Russia.

I hope you have understood my telegram, and I now await your instructions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

P.S.—I find the party to whom the telegram was intrusted announcing my departure for Maku omitted to forward it.

R. M. P.

P.S.S.—The Vartabed told me he had heard from men who had received them that the Sultan had addressed letters to the Chiefs of tribes that the bigotry of the Christians was forcing him to hold an inquiry into the Sassoon affair, but he hoped they would be ready to stand up for their religion when the time came.

R. M. P.

Inclosure 17 in No. 167.

Evidence of Ter-Ghevond, Priest of Karakilessa, Alashgert.

I AM not a refugee, but was sent here as this place was in need of a priest.

I left Karakilessa, Turkey, about the 28th August, 1894. Before I left I heard rumours of the massacres by the regular soldiers and Hamedia at Sassoon and Moush.

In my village, which is in the Hamedia centre, the taxes had been raised from 20 koroosh to 100 per capita towards the support of the army, and not unfrequently we were compelled to pay our taxes twice over, which was always a source of grievance to us.

For six years back the surrounding villages have been continually harassed by Hamedia soldiery. The carrying off of women and girls, cattle and sheep, &c., was of frequent occurrence, and no redress was forthcoming. The result is that for the last two years emigration has been going on continually until last autumn, when a general exodus took place, little or nothing being left on which the people could exist. Large numbers of them remained here (Maku) for a time, but all have passed on to Russia, and are settled in the neighbourhood of Etchmiadzin.

There was no general massacre there that I heard of, but men were killed from time to time in the attempt to protect their property, or in defence of the honour of their wives, daughters, or sisters, and the violation of women had become practically an every-day occurrence.

I heard from a man who passed through this a few days ago that an Armenian girl had been carried off recently from a village where there are still a number of Armenians, and a fight took place between them and the Kurds, many being killed on both sides.

The girl was, however, returned, owing, it was said, to the Kurds having heard of the arrival of the Commissioners in Moush.

Inclosure 18 in No. 167.

Evidence of Asvasatour Grigoriantz, of Bitlis.

I WAS a shoemaker in Bitlis and left there about eight months ago, and went to the district of Ardish.

The Armenians in and around Bitlis are very much oppressed.

About two years ago I was in Karakilessa, Alashgert, and my brother came from Bitlis to see me.

On his leaving, he hired a Kurdish guide who took him well on the road, till they had to pass through a large forest. Here the Kurd murdered my brother, cutting his throat from ear to ear.

There was at that time a moderately good Governor (Rahoob) in Bitlis, who had the Kurd arrested, and the case being proved against him, by witnesses, he was sentenced to fifteen years' imprisonment. He was kept in prison until a new Governor, Shookri Pasha, came and he was then allowed to escape.

This Governor oppressed us very much and resorted to all kinds of schemes to extort money from the Armenians. His usual method was to get up false charges against men who were known to have money, and he would keep them in prison until it was eaten up. There were many in prison on these spurious charges when I left. This man was still Governor when I left, but I heard since that he had been deposed.

In Bitlis itself women were not so much interfered with, but in all the villages round about women and girls were frequently carried off, and the violating of women was so common that I hardly thought of mentioning it.

Two of the chief scourges of the district are Moosa Beg,* of the Khôit Kurds, and Zunar Khan, of the Bakradouni or Balak Kurds. The latter were originally Armenians who, about 600 years ago, were forced to become Mussulmans.

Moosa Beg is well known to the Government to be a leader in these outrages, so much so, that he has been forbidden to enter the town of Bitlis, but this does not hinder his nefarious work in the surrounding villages.

* This is the same man as mentioned by Nubar, wife of Alexan, of Akhlat. There he is designated as "of Moush." He is the same man, also, who nearly cut Dr. Reynolds, of the American Mission, to pieces.—R. M. P.

About two years ago he robbed Mr. Knapp, of the American Mission, and it was partly on this account he was forbidden the city.

Between two and three years ago four Kurds entered a village called Vartanis (about fifty houses), about half-way between Bitlis and Moosh, and violated some women. The men of the village rose up against them and killed all four.

Shortly after, Zamar Pasha and his whole tribe (to which the four men belonged) came down on the village, plundered it, violated the women, and killed between twenty-five and thirty men.

Here they carried away everything worth lifting.

When I left Bitlis the talk was general in regard to the Sassoon massacre. The soldiers talked openly of how they had massacred the people, and I had a friend, Roostam, of Berkri, who was a Kurdish soldier in the regular army, and he told me that when he was called on to join the army going to Sassoon they did not know at first what they were going for, any further, than that the Armenians were in rebellion in that neighbourhood.

They went round by Moosh, and he said that they received orders to put all the Armenians to death and spare none. This order, he understood, came from the Governor of Bitlis and it was faithfully carried out. This soldier told me that after the massacre a sickness broke out among the troops and they were ordered to burn the bodies, as the Commander said the sickness came from them.

They accordingly piled the bodies in large heaps, poured coal oil on them, and set them on fire, the soldiers dancing round while they burned.

This was done every place where many were killed. Where there were few they were allowed to lie. I believe this was to conceal the number killed.

They were gone for two months, and the soldier said they had obliterated eighteen villages. They killed men, women, and children.

Other Kurds told me they thought they must have settled 20,000.

They described the way many children were killed. A soldier would take a child, swing it round his head, and cut off its head as he whirled it round.

They cut up women and took out the fœtus and stuck it on the points of their swords.

Young women were violated, then killed.

This soldier (Roostam) said after they were finished with Sassoon, they were taken to Moosh Plain and were given permission to pillage all Armenian villages they came across, but got no order to kill.

This permission was carried out and only those who resisted were killed, there being no general massacre.

He did not tell me of any massacre in Moosh city. In Sassoon he said some of the Armenians, in many cases, fled to the rocks and having arms resisted them for a few days, but having no food they were soon killed off.

Between 400 or 500 soldiers are always stationed in Bitlis, and sometimes as many as 800. All in the town went under the command of the Meenbashi (I don't know his name) and they were also collected from all places, far and near, such as Van and Ardish. I think the Van contingent came by the south of the lake, but do not know how they returned.

It is two days from Bitlis to Moosh, and one day from Moosh to Sassoon, and the soldiers were away quite two months.

I heard that the Vanek of St. Karapet had been pillaged and partially destroyed.

They were also going to hang Nerses, Bishop of Van, but an Armenian woman sent her four sons, who were rich, to try and save him, and for 500 Medjidiés, paid to the Governor, his sentence was commuted to five years' imprisonment.

The taxes on the Armenians in Bitlis have been so greatly increased that the poorer people find it impossible to exist, and the richer people are bled until they are, sooner or later, reduced to poverty.

I left Ardish in February. There are still some Armenians left there. I heard about the villages being burned and plundered round about, and met, perhaps, from 700 to 1,000 people making their way to Russia.

All the Armenians still left in the villages are preparing to depart, but the Government now prevents them from selling property of any sort, and if they leave they must go and abandon all behind.

Inclosure 19 in No. 167.

Evidence of Bedros, son of Khachick, of Bitlis.

I WAS a shoemaker in Bitlis, but left that place about two months ago as it was impossible to live there, not only because of the insupportable taxation, but because the Mussulmans compelled me to make shoes and work for them and gave me no pay.

As I was coming along I overtook the English Consul, who had come round the north of the lake, but was turned back and was going round the south. The zaptiehs told me he was proceeding to Moosh and Sassoon, but being informed he was going to report what had been occurring there, they could not allow him to go on.

They said he had been treated very disrespectfully. I came round by the north side of the lake.

The Governor Shookri Pasha systematically robbed the rich Armenians by putting them in prison on false pretexts, and keeping them there till he had bled them to whatever extent they could stand. If any one complained of the treatment of these prisoners, he was immediately imprisoned and treated in the same way. All the soldiers in Bitlis went to Sassoon under the command of Mouchir Pasha, who was Commander there. Contingents were also brought from all parts. I don't know from whom Mouchir Pasha took his orders, but they must have come from a higher authority, as they were regular soldiers.

The soldiers from the Van district returned by the north of the lake, along with those from the Ardish region, plundering, ravishing, and killing as they went.

When the military were going towards Sassoon I was in Tadvan, and saw them passing in detachments of from 50 to 100, and they were collecting at Sassoon.

I knew Roostam of Berkri, and he told me that when they reached Sassoon inquiry was made as to the number of villages in that place, and the number of the inhabitants.

He said there were eighteen or nineteen of the former. They then got orders to put the people in those villages to the sword. He would tell me no more, as I think he was afraid.

I heard, however, from many others, principally servants of Emin Pasha, Hassan Pasha, and Tamoor Pasha,* leaders in the massacres.

They had no fear, and were telling openly in the bazaars of what they had done.

They said they had killed about 15,000 or 20,000, judging by the numbers they were told the villages contained, and that they had totally destroyed eighteen villages.

They spoke of how they had violated the women and burned the villages. They also spoke of the way they whirled the children round their heads and cut off their heads.

They said the Armenians had refused to pay their taxes, and they were sent to bring them to their senses.

Those who went round the north of the lake plundered as they went, killing where they were resisted, and burning villages.

I myself passed through Teghout, Akhlat, Adiljivas, Karakeshish, Arinskuss, Khorantz, Sipan, Kazuch, Beshnakouer, Norshen, and Eketzor, most of which are razed to the ground.

Wherever the village was a mixed one, the houses were allowed to stand, but the people were driven out and the houses occupied by Mussulmans.

There are still two or three houses of Armenians left in Arinskuss, Khorantz, and Sipan, though they have suffered from fire. They have endeavoured to improvise a covering out of the ruins.

In Adeljivas there are not more than twenty-five families left out of a large Armenian population.

The four or five families left in Arkhlat are almost naked, and the houses left are occupied by soldiers.

All the Armenian houses in Teghout are also occupied by Kurds.

I and the companies I had picked up on the road were robbed of 103 koroosh and all our clothes while coming along by Mehee of Yikmal. We had difficulty in getting along, but were helped finally by a Kurd.

In the villages I had passed through all the dead had been buried, evidently to destroy the evidence of the oppressor's handiwork.

In Bitlis the Governor prepared papers, being letters of thanks to the Sultan for his care and protection of the Armenians, and for having restored order to the country,

* This is *Tamar Pasha*, the name being pronounced differently by the various witnesses.—C. G. W.

and forced Armenians to sign them, and those who refused were imprisoned until they did.

I can give the names of some of those who were forced to sign in this way, viz., Mukhdusi Aga Jan Bakalian, Avidis Effendi Hatchmandukian, Mukhdusi Grigor Kanderian, and others.

Inclosure 20 in No. 167.

Evidence of Manook Varoniyan, of Boghazkesen.

THIS village contains about thirty houses, all Armenian.

It is now five or six years since the Mussulmans have been giving us much trouble. During this period, from time to time the Kurds would come upon us and carry off portions of our flocks, killing whenever resistance was offered.

I possessed a wheat field at Kishlak, near Boghazkesen, and the year before last, when the grain was getting into the ear, Jindi, son of Mustac, of the Hamzabegi Kurds, turned his flocks into it and ate it all up.

I went to him and complained, and asked where I was to obtain bread, when he had me severely beaten. I had cut my other fields and stored the grain, when he again came upon us and carried it off along with that of the whole village.

Last year, when the first hay crop was ripe, he again turned his flocks on the field. Some men went to remonstrate, and he took up a sickle and cut off a man's leg.

This man died shortly after.

When the second crop was ripe he did the same thing, and carried off another portion of our flocks.

One man (Armenian) was shot at this time. For some reason he afterwards returned the flocks.

Some time after, six men, unknown to me, came and carried off about 600 sheep and 20 rams, and two men, Markara and Yakoub, were killed by them.

Soon after, a man was sent by the Tabour Agha of Van to investigate this matter, as he said, and while there, the Kurds came again and he resisted them. A horse and man were killed at this time, and the Kurds blamed this on the Armenians.

The Government then sent thirty horsemen to the village, and arrested twenty-four Armenians, and took them to Van. Here twenty-three men were put in prison and one in "police" (which is said to be an instrument of torture like a box into which the man is put and squeezed tight. The box is then placed in a cold, damp cell).

Since these men were carried off batches of Government men have come and sat down in the village, practically eating it up.

(The numbers coming from time to time are said to have reached several hundreds.)

They said they were sent to investigate the death of the man, but they never did anything in the matter. They did not violate the women, so far as I know, but demanded meat, and if it could not be provided, they beat the women and dragged them about the floor.

There are almost none but women and old men left in the village, the other men either being in prison or having left.

The women were also forced to give up money and valuables.

This was the state of things when I left with a caravan, and the men were still in prison. I have been here two days, and it is eight days since I left.

When I departed, there was practically nothing left for the Armenians to eat, and, of course, the women and children are helpless, their male relatives being in prison.

The official came last autumn.

Hassan Agha of the Alaud Kurds, and Mahmet Agha of the Melan Kurds, came at two different times and carried off 2,000 sheep (their all) from the village of Azaren, an Armenian village of fifty to sixty houses not far off.

The inhabitants went to Van and complained. The Vali called Mahmet Agha, but Hassan escaped to Persia.

The Vali took a paper from Mahmet Agha that he would restore the sheep, but he only returned 600. They complained again, and the Governor said they ought to be thankful they had got so many back, and he could do no more.

Another time fifty cattle were carried off, but as it was not known definitely who took them they were lost.

No. 168.

Sir M. Durand to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 13.)

(No. 39.)

My Lord, *Tehran, April* 21, 1895.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 31 of the 9th instant, I have the honour to forward two further Reports by Mr. Paton regarding the alleged massacres of Armenians in Turkish territory.

Owing to these Reports having only just arrived, it has been impossible for me to obtain translations of the inclosed extracts from the Armenian newspaper "Hentchak."

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. M. DURAND.

Inclosure 1 in No. 168.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Dear Mr. Wood, *Khoi, March* 29, 1895.

I HAVE been making inquiries in and around Khoi since I last wrote you to find out any fresh arrivals from Turkey, but, apparently, there are none, though it is rumoured that about 200 from different parts are on their way here *en route* for Russia, and are expected to reach Khoi in a few days.

All those who were here when I first arrived have gone on to Erivan, with the exception of a very few who are unable to travel at present. Russia seems to be their goal, and all the efforts of the Vartabed, who endeavoured to induce them to remain, were futile.

Had I been sent here about two or three months before I actually did come, I should have probably been able to gather all the information to be had on the subject; now, as I said in my last communication, that can only be got in Russia in the neighbourhood of Erivan, and the longer we delay in making use of this information, the greater the danger of our losing the opportunity.

Although I suppose it is generally pretty widely known, still it may be not out of place to mention here that the Armenian Nationalists, or "Askasars," are divided into at least three sections, each one at enmity with the other.

Those known as "Dasnakiantz" and "Armenist," so far as I have been able to find out, have nothing particularly objectionable about their ideas with regard to the betterment of their fellow-countrymen, the former aiming at the accomplishment of their object by means of education, and the latter by a system of gradual progression.

On the other hand, those known as "Henchakians" must be regarded with the utmost suspicion and aversion, and wherever they are to be met with they cannot fail to be a source of anxiety as inimical to the peace and welfare of any State or community.

That there is a secret organization of such men who are bound by oath to execute the commands of the Society on pain of death, there is, I think, little reason to doubt.

Some time after my arrival in Khoi I was introduced to a man who, I was told, could give valuable information with regard to the Sassoon massacre. I found, however, that the information of which he was possessed, or, at all events, which he was prepared to communicate, was contained in several numbers of the publication known as "Henchak." I showed considerable interest in what he had to say in the hope of getting as much out of him as possible, but from hints thrown out concerning him, I determined to keep my eye on him.

That he is a Henchakian agent there is no doubt, and I expect he is sent here to secure the sympathy and support of the Armenians in this quarter. He is known under the title "Sargawak," which, I understand, is equivalent to something like "deacon," but I found out, after some difficulty, that letters are addressed to him in the name of "Isolue S. Nercissian," of Tiflis. He is at present living with a teacher in the employment of the American Mission, named Demetrie, who, I have little doubt, is also connected in some way (though probably not actively) with the Secret Society, as he is not only sheltering this man, but had also a man hidden in his house for a night or two who was apparently afraid to be seen, and he refused to give any information regarding him, except that he came from Tabriz. This man went off to Salmas yesterday morning.

Demetrie's brother-in-law in Haftawan, Salmas, also in the employ, I believe, of the American Mission, is known to be a "Henchakian." Again Demetrie is in the confidence of Narcessian, and is evidently in possession of some information which he has hinted at to the American native preacher here, Shamasha Werda (with whom I am staying), but refuses to tell him unless he swears not to reveal it.

Shamasha Werda has been doing his best to ferret it out, but so far he has only been able to learn something of the nature of it without succeeding in getting any details.

The "Henchakians" assert that the Commission of Inquiry has been turned back by the Turks, and they, therefore, maintain that the European Governments are not serious in their investigations, and they have accordingly determined to take the matter into their own hands. What plan they intend to adopt in order to carry out their wild and chemereial schemes, or where, when, and by whom the blow is to be struck, it is impossible to imagine, but they hint vaguely at some strategem to be resorted to for the execution of their revenge upon the Turks.

The teacher Demetrie remarked to the wife of Shamasha Werda (who had been looking after his wife at the birth of a child) that he regretted he could not tell Shamasha what he wanted to know, but that every one would see what would happen in about a month's time.

Whether this is all empty talk, or there is some attempt being made here and in Russia to develop and carry into execution a definite plan of action, it is difficult to find out, as to do so means to discover a traitor who risks his life in divulging their secrets. However, I considered it my duty at least to report what I have been able to discover so far, in order that, if thought advisable, a watch might be kept on these men by the authorities.

Generally speaking, the men of this party have little to lose either in the way of reputation or worldly means, and ignorance and fanaticism may lead them blindly into acts of the utmost desparation and impossibility of accomplishment.

I send you (for what they are worth) by this post the papers I have already referred to, with the articles marked thus * in ink. "Sargawak" informs me that they are written by a Dr. Hamparlzoom Boyajan, under the *noms de plume* of "Murad," "Sal," and "Dzhokhk," and that they were transmitted through him ("Sargawak") to London for publication.

I understand this man "Boyajan" is at present in prison at Bitlis. His brother, Galoost Murooh, I am informed, was hanged in Yoosgad, Silicia, and his sister, I believe, is at present writing letters regarding the oppression of the Armenians in Silicia.

Although the American missionaries in Salmas have done what they could in helping to get information, they carefully concealed from me the fact of their having received a letter on the subject from their fellow missionaries in Van. I have, however, discovered that they did receive such a letter, and that in it this same "Murad" is largely blamed as the cause of the massacre at Sassoon.

He is said to have resided among the people there, and puffed up their heads and boasted openly about what he was going to accomplish for them, and, in short, was the means of causing a section of them to assume a defiant attitude towards the Government, which brought down on the heads of the misguided and deluded creatures the terrible and unjustifiably severe retribution.

Had the punishment fallen on these mentally perverted fanatics and their minions perhaps it would have been little matter for regret, but too often unfortunately they escape, and, as in this case, evidently the many innocent have suffered for or along with the guilty few, apparently just such an opportunity being eagerly seized by the Mussulman element as furnishing an excuse, however shadowy, for wholesale plunder, rapine, and murder, their ravages being carried far beyond the utmost limits of the region in which, they beguiled themselves with the idea, they found justification for their acts.

I have heard it asserted, with, I believe, a foundation of truth, that some of these extremists are so utterly distorted in their mental vision that, believing like the Jesuits of old that the "end justifies the means," they actually use their endeavours to bring about such a sacrifice of human blood as the recent massacres, thereby trusting to thrust their grievances upon the civilized European Powers through the medium of the universal public voice clamouring for justice to outraged humanity.

I have received news from Salmas of a man, who came from Turkey a little more than a week ago, who is evidently sent by the Turks as a spy. It appears he is partly Armenian and partly Nestorian, but is regarded by the Armenians with great repugnance as he is known to be in the pay of the Turkish Government, and has been employed as a "Mamoor" or Commissioner on several occasions.

It is said that one or two of the refugees, who were still lingering in Salmas, fled when they heard of his arrival. I am not aware that he is yet conscious of my existence, but he has openly expressed his intention of visiting Khoi, as he says, to see the Turkish Consul.

I think the chances of my coming across any refugees from Sassoon here are now very remote, but of course I shall continue here until I receive instructions to return to Tabriz or proceed to Erivan.

During the time I am in this neighbourhood, naturally, if I hear of any place in Persia where information is likely to be got, I shall proceed there.

I have, &c.

(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 168.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Khoi, April 5, 1895.

Dear Mr. Wood,

SINCE I last wrote you on the 29th ultimo I have seen a few more people from Armenian villages east of Van, but there seem to be none now coming from places west of that city. Their stories are all very similar to those I have already sent, but I send two more specimens, which will help to show the general state of matters during the last few years as well as last autumn.

I have heard that there are some men just arrived from Turkey in Van, and I intend to go and see them to-morrow. There are also said to be some families in and around Kotour, so that if not recalled I shall probably go there after I return from Van.

I have not been able to discover anything further with regard to any organized movement by the "Henchakians," and perhaps their mutterings are more indicative of what they would like to do than what they are actually prepared for; however, I shall be on the watch.

Yours faithfully,

(Signed) ROBT. MOIR PATON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 168.

Evidence of Yusif, son of Yohanan of Sara.

SARA is about four hours north-east from Khoshab, and consists of about 100 houses of Syrians.

I, along with Reshu, son of Goorgoo, was compelled to come to Khoi by Husein Agha, Kaïmakam of Sara, to purchase for him a tray for a Semovar and a brass bowl, and to find some rosebushes for him.

It is almost impossible for us to exist, as the Turkish Government and the Kurds between them take almost all our belongings.

It is now two years since the Government imposed a tax upon every new-born child of 2 white Majedias, and if we do not announce the birth within ten days they impose a fine of 2 gold liras over and above the 2 white Majedias.

Within the last six months the Hamedia Kurds have come four times, and taken from our village our sheep, cattle, and donkeys, all our wheat and grain, until they have practically reduced the whole village to poverty.

During that time they have also forced six women, three girls, and ten men to become Mussulmans, and killed two men.

Within the last eighteen months they have killed about thirty men. Last summer three women went to the hills to milk the sheep, and some soldiers ravished them and then let them go. This is a thing that happens from time to time.

They would sometimes take women away for days, then send them back when they were finished with them.

They also robbed our church, taking away about 1,000 tomans' worth of things, and also the door of the church.

Last autumn we heard that an order had come from the Sultan permitting a raid to be made on all Christian villages, allowing three hours to kill and plunder in each place

visited, but we also heard that after the massacres of Sassoon and Moush the British Government had forbidden the carrying out of this order.

We heard that 7,000 had been killed in Sassoon; 30,000 in the plain and city of Moush and other districts.

Many refugees from Sassoon, Moush, and other districts passed through our village, and they said all they possessed had been destroyed—their relatives, friends, houses, goods—and they had nothing left, and, with regard to women, that all the old women and unattractive children had been killed in a brutal fashion, but young women and pretty children had been made Mussulmans. About 1,000 houses from all parts passed through our village for Russia.

We also heard about what had taken place from some new Osmanli officers who had come to take charge of the Hamedia soldiery, and from people in Van.

At one time we had guns, but they were taken from us and given to Hamedia Kurds, and we are now defenceless.

In the village of Karasorik there are six Syrians and about fifty Kurdish houses. About four or five years ago there were about fifty Syrian houses, but the families have all been gradually driven off through oppression. It is situated about two and a-half hours east of Sara.

Last autumn the Hamedia Kurds came down upon the Syrians in this village, killing two men and carrying off about 100 sheep and all their grain. They also carried off or destroyed their agricultural implements.

Here they compelled one family of seven persons to become Mussulmans.

At Khinü (one quarter of an-hour north-east of Arjak) there are fifty Syrian houses. Here last autumn 300 sheep, 60 oxen, and 20 buffaloes, as well as most of the grain, were carried off. One man, Iriana, was killed.

At Kasrik there are about forty Armenian houses. It is situated south-west of Khoshab. Last autumn the Hamedia Kurds entered the village, killed three men, and carried off about 2,000 sheep and cattle, and also two girls.

At Armanis (about two hours east from Khinü) there are about sixty Syrian houses, and here last autumn the Hamedia Kurds killed two men, carried off about 1,500 sheep, 300 oxen, buffaloes, &c., 40 donkeys, and all the grain. A son of Doorbas Khan was the leader in this.

I could mention many other villages where the same things took place last autumn. The general rule was that the Hamedia Kurds would go to a place and demand certain things, and if the people could not or would not give them, they were beaten or killed.

The leaders in those raids were Mehmet Beg, of the Mehli tribe; Hussein Beg, of the Taroorni tribe; Abraham Beg, of the Müküri tribe; Doorbas Khan, of the Shemsikini tribe; and Hateb Agha, of the Yezidis.

Inclosure 4 in No. 168.

Evidence of Avidis, of Asdwadzatzin.

THERE are sixty Armenian houses in this village, and it lies between Terkashen and the lake.

The Hamedia Kurds were a constant source of trouble to us, coming frequently and carrying off our cattle and sheep, and occasionally our women.

In spring of last year those men, to the number of about forty horsemen and fifteen foot, under the leadership of Jaffir Beg, of the Mataragha tribe, came down upon our village and carried off 500 sheep, killing a man called Haratoon, and wounding two men. They at this time also took away one woman and a girl, who were compelled to become Mussulmans. We told the Kurds we would complain to the Vali, and they said we could complain to any one we chose, and that they had the Sultan's order for what they did. We sent eight of the chief men of the village under Soloman to complain to the Vali of Van. He (Bahari Pasha) said, "I can do nothing to help you; they are Government soldiers. There is nothing for you but to leave the country." We, however, still remained, believing that we would now have some peace, but in autumn, about a month after the comet was seen, the Hamedia again returned, and carried off 400 cattle and buffaloes and all the grain they could carry, burning the rest. They left a few animals, but soon after the Government came down on us for more taxes, and as we could not pay, all that was left of our possession were taken, and our houses either occupied by the soldiers or torn down for the wood.

About 200 were thus rendered homeless, and we had to leave, most going to Russia, and about eight families settling in Salmas. I believe about fifteen families are still left in Asdwadzatzin. They would like to leave, but are forbidden.

When the Hamedis came to plunder us at any time they always said they had the authority of the Sultan to plunder us and kill if we resisted.

The tax for every new-born child was 2 white Majedias, and if we did not report we were kept in prison until we had paid at least 2 gold liras.

We could not give the name of an Armenian village where the treatment was not much the same.

At a village called Kürübash, a little south-east of Van, four men and five girls went into the mountains to gather herbs one forenoon, and while they were sitting by a spring eating some bread six or seven Kurds came up, gave them salaams, and sat down beside them. They were apparently friendly at first, but when they saw the women were pretty they began to quarrel with the men, and finally bound them, cut their throats, and carried off the girls.

They abused the girls, and at night took them back to their village of Kürübash, and told them to give their salaams to their people.

The relatives of the murdered men went and recovered their bodies, and took them to the Vali. On the way they were attacked, and some Armenians were wounded, but they succeeded in reaching the Vali (Babari Pasha), and showed him the bodies, and asked why such things were permitted. He said, laughingly, "Have you no money to bury the bodies, and want me to pay for the cloth?" Then he said it was their own fault, and they had no right to oppose the Kurds. This story is known to all round about.

No. 169.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 299.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 6, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting a fight between Turks and Armenians at Uniah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 169.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, April 25, 1895.*

SOME drunken Turks and Armenians had a fight last Sunday at Uniah, and about fifteen of them were wounded before the authorities could interfere. Most of the combatants on both sides have been arrested, and the Kaimakam of Thermeh, Bessim Effendi, who is reputed to be good and honest, has been dispatched there to investigate the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 170.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 293.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 7, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting the visit of the American cruiser "San Francisco" to Alexandretta.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 170.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Aleppo, April 24, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to report the arrival at Alexandretta on the 20th instant of the American cruiser "San Francisco," commanded by Admiral Kirkland, with a crew of 393 persons and 20 guns.

On arrival, the Admiral paid a visit to the Acting Governor, and addressed him as follows:—

"My Government has ordered me to come from Palermo to Alexandretta to tell you that we demand that all our subjects and protégés shall be treated with justice in conformity with the Capitulations and Treaties. I am not charged with the duty of examining the question whether you do so or not—only be good enough to take note of what I say."

Having delivered this message, and refused to accept any entertainment, the Admiral took an abrupt departure. Two days later he left for Mersyna, where he will deliver a similar message.

I think that this visit of the American Admiral cannot fail to have a good effect, but it would have been far more to the purpose if it had happened two months ago, when there was real cause for anxiety at Aintab and Marash, whereas the Americans themselves inform me that since the Bairam there has been a marked change for the better in the behaviour of the authorities.

I would repeat that all these past troubles were chiefly due to the personal action of the Vali of Aleppo, irrespective of any orders he may have received from Constantinople, and the United States' Government have special reason to be dissatisfied with the manner in which their Representative in Aleppo has been treated by him.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 171.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 296.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 7, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum on the state of affairs in that town.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 171.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 5, 1895.*

AS I had the honour to report by telegraph to your Excellency on the 31st ultimo, the Bairam festival passed quite quietly, thanks to the extraordinary precautions taken by the civil, military, and religious authorities, after representations had been made by my colleagues and myself to the Vali on the subject of the ill-treatment of Christians by soldiers and others.

It was remarked, after the three days' festival was over, that these precautions, far from being relaxed, were maintained, and even increased; the number of patrols has been raised to eighty, and the cavalry and artillery soldiers, of whom they are chiefly composed, are armed with rifles, in addition to the sabres which they carried before; while the detachments in the guard-houses have been largely reinforced.

I think there can be little doubt that the authorities have received information that preparations were on foot among the numerous bad characters to be found among the Turkish townspeople to create disturbances, mainly with a view to pillage; many of this class, who took part in the massacre of June 1890 with ample impunity, having openly expressed their regrets at the opportunities for plunder which they then foolishly missed. Two or three of their meetings have within the last few days been broken up by the police and military patrols, not without bloodshed, and a number of the would-be ringleaders have been lodged in prison. I also learn that, on the second day of Bairam, something approaching a mutiny took place in the artillery barracks among the men commanded by Hassan Effendi Muhi-Eddin, who, resenting the orders to confine them to barracks, were only prevented by force from breaking out and showing, in a practical way, their approval of their commanding officer's conduct.

Nothing has been done so far to punish the said Hassan Effendi, who now denies having ever assaulted the tailor Tatos, although the Vali has admitted to my Russian colleague that he believed him to be guilty. On the other hand, his victim has been subjected to very severe pressure by the police authorities, who are endeavouring, by alternate threats and promises of reward, to make him sign a declaration that the charge was a false one, which he had been prompted to make by a foreign Consul, presumably myself. He has also been examined by a Commission of six Turkish military doctors, who drew up a Report to the effect that his injuries could not have been inflicted with a sabre. This latter proceeding bears a strong family likeness to the declaration of the Mousli military doctors that the wounds of the witness Ovak could not have been inflicted with a bayonet, and I believe that even experts would find it impossible to make any such positive assertion on the subject.

Considerable anxiety seems to reign in military circles just now, resulting in unwonted activity. The General in command of the division, Shahab Pasha, holds daily councils with his staff, and has carried out a complete inspection of the fortifications. The town moat is being filled with water, various paths crossing the ramparts have been closed to traffic, and ball cartridge has been served out to the sentries. At the same time, a stricter and more annoying espionage is maintained, chiefly by military agents, upon the Consuls and other foreign residents; the annoyance of these proceedings, however, is somewhat tempered by their barefaced and ludicrous inefficiency. The only motive which I know of for these precautions is to be found in the persistent rumours of the concentration of Russian troops, the most usual form being that a division is now collected at a point about six hours distant from the frontier. But so far I do not believe that there is the slightest foundation for these reports, except in the fact that the neighbouring garrisons on the Russian side have been slowly and quietly strengthened by small detachments during the past three or four months.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 172.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 207.)
My Lord,
Pera, May 7, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, informing me of instructions received by the Italian Consul respecting Armenian political suspects and prisoners.

I have approved the answer which Consul Longworth returned to Count Francisci, and have directed him to use his own discretion as to showing despatches to his colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 172.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir,
Trebizond, April 28, 1895.

THE Italian Consul called to inform me that, in answer to his application for instructions, he had been directed by Baron Blanc to confer and act with me whenever his protection is required by Armenian political suspects.

After inquiring about some prisoners, Count Francisci asked whether he could render me any assistance. In thanking him I remarked that at present there was no need of my putting him to any trouble, but that, should occasion arise, I would gladly avail myself of his kind offer.

Your Excellency will, I think, approve of my answer, prompted as it was by two considerations: firstly, the readiness of the Vali to treat political suspects with leniency, and, secondly, the umbrage the authorities may feel were all the Consuls to exercise semi-official interference in such matters, which, unless treated with tact, delicacy, and moderation, is likely to increase rather than diminish the malevolent disposition evinced towards Armenians.

I should like to add here that several of my colleagues, especially the French Consul, frequently ask me for information on the affairs of this vilayet, as well as that of Sivas. Were I to show them confidentially a few of my despatches, it would, I think, please them, without doing any harm. May I request to know whether I can do so at my own discretion and judgment?

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 173.

Consul-General Blunt to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 28.)
My Lord,
Salonica, May 7, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship, with reference to my despatch No. 21 of the 30th March last, that the Armenian lawyer of Aleppo, M. Aghob Renzi Ghazarian, who was imprisoned at Jaffa, has been released by the Turkish authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. G. BLUNT.

No. 174.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 124. Confidential.)
My Lord,
St. Petersburgh, May 8, 1895.

I CALLED upon Prince Lobanoff this afternoon, and read to him your Lordship's despatch No. 132 of the 3rd instant on the subject of the project of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Turkey, which has been drawn up by the English, French, and Russian Ambassadors at Constantinople.

Prince Lobanoff said that he could in the first place tell me that he had telegraphed to M. de Nélidoff, authorizing him to join in the scheme of reforms a proviso that the selection of the High Commissioner who is to be charged with the supervision of the reforms shall be approved by the Powers.

His Excellency also said that he agreed with your Lordship in attaching great value to unanimity on the part of the Powers, and he was disposed to leave the question to be dealt with by the Ambassadors.

His Excellency then went on to say that he had carefully read the Memorandum and project of reforms which were included in your Lordship's despatch, and he would not conceal his personal opinion that they were open to objection. In the first place, they were to apply to a far greater extent of territory than he anticipated. He had recently had a conversation with an Armenian dignitary, who, in reply to his question as to what

constituted Armenia had indicated the Provinces of Erzeroum, Van, and Moush. The Ambassadors, however, proposed that the reforms should apply to six vilayets, or nearly the half of Asia Minor, and he thought it would be almost impossible to induce the Sultan to agree to this. Again, he thought it would have been better to have proposed some measures of control, such as the approval by the Powers of the selection of certain Governors, rather than to have drawn up a scheme of administration which his knowledge of the country made him believe would never be carried out. As a matter of fact, the proposals are taken almost entirely from Aristarchi's "Législation Ottomane," and nominally form part of the law of the country at the present day. The Powers, he thought, would assume a very heavy responsibility if they were to insist on these reforms being carried out, and they could only do so by direct interference in the internal affairs of the country.

On my observing that Turkey had by Treaty given the Powers the right to demand reforms, Prince Lobanoff replied that this was perfectly true, but it was a right which, in his opinion, could only be very sparingly used. He certainly would be delighted to see a greater amount of liberty granted to all the Christian subjects of the Sultan, but it was a very great responsibility to undertake the administration of Turkish provinces, even if it could be done without causing serious complications. On the other hand, a refusal on the part of the Sultan to adopt the scheme would be a rebuff which would weaken our authority in Turkey.

Prince Lobanoff begged me to consider the remarks he had made as the expression of his personal opinion, and not as the official views of the Russian Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 175.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 175.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 13, 1895, 12·5 P.M.*

I HAVE received from Mr. Shipley a telegram giving an account of the visit of the Commission to Ghelié-Guzan.

The Delegates started on the 5th May at 3 in the afternoon. The Commissioners caught them up the same evening, and they continued their journey in company. The villages of Shenik and Semal, which lay on their route, had been destroyed by fire, and the fields laid waste. They arrived at Ghelié-Guzan on the 8th.

The witness Tavo pointed out to them three trenches lying between the house of Bedo and the former encampment of the soldiers. Two of these trenches were opened in their presence. In the first they found only fragments of clothing. Round the second, a space of some 30 yards by 10 was strewn with pieces of human bones and bits of clothing; amongst other things, they saw two skulls, and in the trench they found, among fragments of bone and clothing, a putrefied corpse clothed and three skulls, one of which had still some hair adhering to it, and contained a portion of the brain.

The peasants, however, refused to continue the digging on account of the nauseating smells, and said also that they were not likely to find any more bodies there.

As to the third trench, Tovo declared that it contained no remains. The Delegates, therefore, did not have it opened.

They, however, made the villagers dig up a fourth place near the village, and this brought to light a decapitated trunk, an arm with its hand, three skulls, and some small bones.

They had the ground round dug up, but without result. The smells here were again overpowering.

The villagers stated that on their return they had themselves removed many bodies from the three trenches, and buried them near the church.

The Delegates found the village itself, which had contained something like 120 houses, entirely burnt out, and the thirty families still left living in a destitute condition in huts.

The Commissioners threw the onus of continuing the work of excavation on the Delegates after the first remains had been brought to light, declaring that they

were convinced on the report of their medical officer that the bodies had been there for some two or three months at longest. The Delegates left on the 9th May, and for the first three hours Mr. Shipley reports that their line of march was dotted with hamlets of from five to twenty houses completely ruined, not even the walls being left standing.

No. 176.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 176.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 13, 1895.*

I HAVE received the following telegram from the British Consul-General at Beyrout:—

"According to a telegram which the Governor-General of Beyrout received yesterday evening from Tyre, there had been a quarrel that same afternoon between Christian and Mussulman boatmen, which had terminated in the wounding of several of the combatants on either side, some of the wounds being of a serious nature.

"His Excellency reported the matter to Constantinople by telegraph, adding that he was dispatching the Procureur-Général and a few soldiers in a gun-boat to the spot to restore order.

"He received, however, a reply to the effect that he was to proceed himself to Tyre.

"The gun-boat left at night, but the Vali received information before he started that the disturbance had ceased, and that peace was being kept by patrols of Christians and Mussulmans."

No. 177.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 13.)

(No. 177.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 13, 1895, 7·30 P.M.*

TO-DAY the Dragomans presented a copy of the "Projet de Réformes" to the Porte, together with a copy of the instructions sent home in my despatch No. 308 of the 11th May.

I received a visit yesterday from Munir Bey, who informed me, on the part of the Sultan, that our proposals were to be referred to the Council of Ministers and to the Reforms Commission.

No. 178.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 189.)
Foreign Office, May 14, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 271 of the 30th ultimo, inclosing one addressed to you by Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, relative to the bad feeling prevailing between Christians and Mussulmans in Palestine.

I request your Excellency to bring this unsatisfactory state of things to the knowledge of the Turkish Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 179.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 190.)
Foreign Office, May 14, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 267 of the 30th ultimo relative to the misconduct of Sheikh Mooss, a Turkish captain, at Shattakh, and I approve of your having called the attention of the Turkish Government to the facts reported by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 180.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 191.)
Foreign Office, May 14, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE received your Excellency's despatch No. 278 of the 30th ultimo, stating that you have brought to the notice of the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs the case of the detention, and attempted conversion to Islam, of the daughter of the Armenian priest, Daniel.

I approve your action in the matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 181.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 208.)
Constantinople, May 9, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo in regard to Armenian prisoners at Pyas, Adana, Jebel Bereker, and Urfa.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 181.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Aleppo, April 20, 1895.

Sir,

REFERRING to my despatch of the 16th instant, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the following is, as far as I have been able to ascertain, a correct list of the Armenians imprisoned at Pyas:—

1. Alexander Kilidjian, of Denek Maden, Professor at Yuzgat College.
2. Bedros Kircochian, of Denek Maden.
3. Agob Paglayan, ditto.
4. Keopé Paglayan, ditto.
5. Philibos Tarmazabian, of Talass, near Kaiserieh.
6. Ananias Keshishian, of Gurin, in the Vilayet of Sivas.
7. Hadji Agob Abadjian, of Kaiserieh.
8. Hatchik Bandikian, of Van.

These were accused of having posted up seditious placards at the town of Denek Maden in December 1892, and, with the exception of Hatchik Bandikian, were sentenced to perpetual imprisonment, the sentence of the latter being for fifteen years.

9. Sarkis Der Torossian, of the city of Adana, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment for having been found in possession of a number of the newspaper "Armenia."

10. Devlet Dadourian, of Hadjin.

11. Agob Der Agobian, ditto.

These are each undergoing sentences of five years' imprisonment, but other particulars of their case are unknown here.

12. Ohannes Kara Sarkissian, of Tchok Merdziven, is accused of having had in his possession the portrait of the Archbishop of Fernouz. He has not been sentenced yet. I am informed that Philibos Tamarzabian, above named, is a lad of 13, who has been subjected to great cruelty in prison.

I have to add the following names to the list of prisoners confined at Adana which I forwarded on the 16th instant:—

1. Baghdassa Balian.
2. Zakar Balian.
3. Panoss Bodrum.
4. Kevork Keshishian.
5. Agob Serkissian.
6. Hosep Serkissian.

These are political prisoners who have not yet been tried.

The following political prisoners are confined at Jebel Bereker, in the Adana Vilayet:—

1. Hohannes Balian.
2. Boghos Dan Kabakian.
3. Serkis Semerdjian.
4. Avidis Derderian.
5. Ohannes Kara Sarkissian.
6. Sarkis Minassian.

The following eighteen Armenians are in prison at Urfa awaiting trial for complicity in the death of a Kurd at Djebeen, a village in the Sandjak of Urfa, under the circumstances reported at the close of my despatch of the 3rd instant:—

Agob Torossian.
Boghos Torossian.
Moyses Karpoian.
Hacho Khaladjian.
Nerses Sarkouyan.
Kirkor Garabed.
Kirkor Garabed's son Agob.
Kirkor Oghlou Apon.
Kirkor Oghlou Seropé.
Peniamin.
Babul Krecor.
Kurkli Nerses.
Kurkli Kevork.
Adjem Oghlou Ohannes.
Adjem Oghlou Toross.
Baubal Aghob.
Sakko Oghlou Aghob.
And a brother of—
Adjem Oghlou Ohannes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 182.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 308.)
Constantinople, May 11, 1895.

My Lord,

THE Dragomans of the British, French, and Russian Embassies presented to-day at the Palace a copy and translation of the Memorandum and Project of Reforms for the Eastern Provinces of Asia Minor, as approved by the three Governments.

I have the honour to inclose a copy of this paper and of a joint instruction addressed by my French and Russian colleagues and myself to our respective Dragomans, and of which they were instructed to deliver a translation in handing in the documents in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 182.

Memorandum.

Mars–Avril 1895.

LE projet ci-annexé contenant l'ensemble des dispositions qu'il serait nécessaire d'introduire dans l'organisation administrative, financière, et judiciaire des vilayets mentionnés, il a paru utile d'indiquer dans un Mémorandum séparé certaines mesures qui dépassent le cadre d'un Règlement administratif, mais qui sont la base même de ce Règlement et dont l'adoption par la Sublime Porte est d'une importance primordiale.

Ces différents points sont :—

1. La réduction éventuelle du nombre des vilayets.

2. Les garanties pour le choix des Valis.

3. L'amnistie des Arméniens condamnés ou détenus pour faits politiques.

4. La rentrée des Arméniens émigrés ou exilés.

5. Le réglement définitif des procès pour crimes et délits de droit commun, actuellement en cours.

6. L'examen de l'état des prisons, et de la situation des prisonniers.

7. La nomination d'un Haut Commissaire de surveillance pour la mise en application des réformes dans les provinces.

8. La création d'une Commission Permanente de Contrôle à Constantinople.

9. La réparation des dommages subis par les Arméniens victimes des événements de Sassoun et de Talori, &c.

10. La régularisation des affaires de conversion religieuses.

11. Le maintien et la stricte application des droits et privilèges concédés aux Arméniens.

12. La situation des Arméniens dans les autres vilayets de la Turquie d'Asie.

1. *Réduction Eventuelle du Nombre des Vilayets.*

Les réformes devant être appliquées dans les six vilayets d'Erzeroum, Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, et Diarbékir, il y aurait lieu d'étudier la réduction du nombre de ces provinces. Une nouvelle répartition, qui permettrait de réaliser une certaine économie dans les dépenses générales de

Pendant dix ans antérieurement à 1878 l'Eyalet d'Erzeroum comprenait les districts de Tchildir, Kars, Erzeroum (vilayet actuel), ainsi que Van, y compris Hekkiari, Bitlis, et Mouch. Cet Eyalet fut ensuite divisé en cinq vilayets, après la guerre de 1877-78; la partie de ce territoire qui restait à la Turquie fut divisée en Vilayets: Erzeroum, Van, Hekkiari, Mouch. Depuis lors le district Hekkiari a été rattaché au Vilayet de Van, et le district de Mouch au Vilayet de Bitlis nouvellement créé. Depuis lors aussi le Sandjak de Mamouret-ul-Aziz est devenu vilayet avec l'addition de quelques territoires voisins, tandis que le Vilayet de Deyrsim est redevenu sandjak.

l'Administration, faciliterait peut-être le choix des Valis en en diminuant le nombre et fortifierait leur autorité en améliorant leur situation matérielle. Elle devrait être faite de façon que les populations fussent réparties en groupes ethnographiques le plus homogènes possible dans les différentes unités administratives de chaque province.

2. *Nomination des Valis garantie.*

Les Puissances, attachant la plus grande importance au choix des Valis, dont dépendra essentiellement l'efficacité des réformes prévues par le Traité de Berlin, sont résolues à faire à la Sublime Porte des représentations chaque fois que le choix se porterait sur des personnes dont la nomination pourrait présenter des inconvénients; c'est pourquoi elles trouveraient nécessaire que le Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman, afin d'éviter sur ce point des malentendus fâcheux, voulût bien tenir officieusement les Représentants des Puissances au courant des choix qu'il aurait l'intention de faire.

3. *Amnistie.*

Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan accordera une large amnistie aux Arméniens accusés ou condamnés pour des faits politiques et qui ne seraient pas convaincus de participation directe à des crimes de droit commun.

4. *Rentrée des Emigrés.*

Tous les Arméniens à quelque religion qu'ils appartiennent, qui auraient été exilés sans jugement soit hors du territoire de l'Empire Ottoman, soit hors des provinces qu'ils habitaient, ou qui auraient été forcés d'émigrer à l'étranger poussés par la misère ou par crainte des événements, sans y avoir pris une part criminelle, pourront librement rentrer en Turquie ou dans des provinces qu'ils avaient dû quitter, sans être inquiétés par les autorités. Ils rentreront en possession des biens qu'ils possédaient avant d'avoir quitté le pays.

5. *Réglement des Procès.*

Tous les procès pour crimes ou délits de droit commun, actuellement en cours d'instruction ou de jugement, devront être réglés sans retards. Des Commissions Judiciaires, déléguées spécialement

de Constantinople, seront envoyées dans chaque vilayet et procéderont rapidement, au chef-lieu de chaque sandjak, au règlement de toutes les instances en suspens.

Leurs décisions ne seront susceptibles d'aucun recours.

Ces Commissions se composeront d'un Président et de deux Assesseurs, dont l'un Musulman et l'autre Chrétien. Elles seront accompagnées d'un Juge d'Instruction et d'un Procureur. L'un des deux sera Chrétien.

6. *État des Prisons.*

Dé hauts fonctionnaires seront délégués de Constantinople pour inspecter les prisons dans chaque Vilayet, se rendre compte de leur état matériel, de la situation des prisonniers, et du traitement dont ils sont l'objet. Ils s'enquerront de la conduite des Directeurs et des gardiens des prisons et pourront proposer la révocation immédiate et la mise en jugement de ceux qui n'auraient pas observé, à l'égard des condamnés ou des détenus, les prescriptions de la loi.

Chacun de ces hauts fonctionnaires sera accompagné d'un adjoint, qui sera Chrétien s'il est Musulman, et inversement.

Ils devront, dans un délai de quatre mois au plus, rédiger un Rapport où ils consigneront toutes leurs observations sur le résultat de leur mission, ainsi que sur les modifications et améliorations à introduire dans le service et l'aménagement des prisons.

7. *Haut Commissaire de Surveillance pour l'Application des Réformes.*

Dès que les nouveaux Valis auront été nommés, ils se rendront au chef-lieu de vilayet, en vue d'organiser l'administration de la province sur les bases nouvellement adoptées.

Ils procéderont à l'installation des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacams nommés par le Gouvernement, à la répartition territoriale des nahiés dans chaque caza; ils feront dresser les listes électorales et procéder à l'élection des Conseils de Nahiés, ainsi qu'à celle des Mudirs.

Ils veilleront à ce que les Collecteurs d'impôts soient élus sans retard et à ce que le budget de la province et la répartition des charges entre les différentes subdivisions administratives soient établis dans le plus bref délai possible.

Note d'Assim Pacha du 3 Octobre 1880 (Réformes en Arménie, Art. 1, para. 1.)

Un Haut Commissaire, délégué spécialement par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, et dont le choix serait approuvé par les Puissances, sera chargé de surveiller l'exécution prompte et exacte de ces réformes. Pendant toute la durée de sa mission, il aura pleine et entière autorité sur les Valis qui le tiendront au courant de toutes les mesures qu'ils prendraient pour l'application des nouveaux Règlements.

Le Haut Commissaire Impérial recevra les Pétitions et les vœux des habitants et devra en tenir compte dans les limites des nouveaux Règlements. Il terminera sa mission par une inspection générale des vilayets et aura le pouvoir de réformer les mesures qui n'auraient pas été prises en conformité avec la loi et les nouveaux Règlements.

Le Haut Commissaire Impérial sera accompagné dans sa mission par un adjoint qui sera Chrétien s'il est Musulman, et inversement.

8. *Commission Permanente de Contrôle.*

Il sera institué à la Sublime Porte une Commission Permanente de Contrôle, chargée de surveiller l'exacte application des réformes.

Cette Commission sera présidée par un haut fonctionnaire de l'Empire, civil ou militaire. Elle se composera de six membres pris parmi les hauts fonctionnaires civils de l'État compétents en matières administrative, juridique, et financière; trois d'entre eux seront Musulmans et les trois autres Chrétiens.

Elle se réunira à la Sublime Porte au moins une fois par mois.

Elle aura pour mission de surveiller la stricte application des Lois et Règlements, de signaler à la Sublime Porte les irrégularités qu'elle constaterait dans l'Administration ainsi que les fonctionnaires qui manqueraient à leurs devoirs; de recevoir les Pétitions et d'examiner les vœux et doléances de la population ainsi que tous les rapports qui pourraient lui être adressés par les représentants des communautés.

C'est à elle que les Ambassades feront parvenir directement par l'intermédiaire de leurs Dragomans, tous les renseignements et communications qu'elles jugeraient nécessaires.

Elle pourra demander aux Valis des rapports sur les questions qu'elle serait ainsi appelée à examiner. Deux fois par an, les Gouverneurs-Généraux devront lui adresser une note détaillée sur l'état des prisons et la situation des prisonniers.

Elle pourra délégner, quand elle le jugera à propos, un ou plusieurs de ses membres pour faire des tournées d'inspection dans les vilayets.

Elle présentera à la Sublime Porte des rapports sur toutes ces questions et aura le droit de correspondance directe avec les Valis et les Départements Ministériels compétents.

9. *Réparations à accorder aux Arméniens Victimes des Événements de Sassoun, Talori, &c.*

Les Arméniens qui auraient eu à souffrir soit dans leurs personnes, soit dans leurs biens des événements de Sassoun, Talori, &c., recevront des indemnités et réparations convenables.

Le Haut Commissaire Impérial de surveillance sera chargé de faire les investigations et de prendre les mesures nécessaires à cet effet.

10. *Conversions Religieuses.*

La Sublime Porte veillera à ce que les conversions religieuses soient entourées de toutes les garanties découlant des principes établis par le Hatti-Houmayoun de 1856 (Articles 10, 11, et 12) et trop souvent éludés dans la pratique.

Les personnes qui voudraient changer de religion devront être majeures et ne pourront être autorisées à faire leur déclaration de changement de religion qu'après un délai d'une semaine pendant laquelle elles seront placées sous la surveillance du chef de leur culte.

11. *Maintien des Privilèges des Arméniens.*

La Sublime Porte donnera des instructions précises aux autorités pour empêcher le retour des infractions contraires aux droits et privilèges découlant pour le clergé Arménien et la communauté du Sahmanatroutioun de 1863 (Statut Organique des Arméniens) et des Bérats octroyés par les Sultans.

12. *Situation des Arméniens dans les autres Vilayets de la Turquie d'Asie.*

Dans les autres vilayets de la Turquie d'Asie où la population Arménienne de certains sandjaks forme une partie notable de la population générale, il sera nommé auprès du Vali un fonctionnaire Chrétien spécial chargé des intérêts des Arméniens.

Ce fonctionnaire recevra les Pétitions et réclamations de la population Arménienne et les fera connaître au Vali qui leur donnera, d'accord avec lui, la suite qu'elles comportent.

Ce fonctionnaire adressera en outre régulièrement des Rapports à la Commission Permanente de Contrôle à Constantinople.

Dans ces vilayets, s'il se trouve certaines localités (telles que Hadjin (Vilayet d'Adana) ou Zeitoun (Vilayet d'Alep), &c.), où les Arméniens forment la majorité de la population, la division administrative actuelle sera modifiée et les prescriptions, du projet de réformes, sur la constitution des nahiés seront appliquées aux localités ainsi érigées en unités administratives séparées.

Inclosure 2 in No. 182.

Projet de Réformes Administratives à introduire dans les Provinces Orientales de l'Asie Mineure : Vilayets actuels d'Erzeroum, Bitlis, Van, Sivas, Mamouret-ul-Aziz, Diarbékir.

Chapitre I.—*Valis.*

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 12, Art. 39; Vol. v, pp. 50, 51, Art. 5.

Article 1er. Les Valis seront choisis parmi les hauts dignitaires de l'État sans distinction de religion, présentant les plus grandes garanties d'intelligence, de capacité, et de probité. On s'abstiendra en conséquence de nommer aux fonctions de Valis des personnes dont la désignation présenterait de notoriété générale, des inconvénients d'ordre public ou politique.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 50 *et seq.*
Instructions sur les Vilayets, Chap. I et II.

La Sublime Porte, convaincu que l'application efficace des mesures et réformes qui suivent dépend essentiellement des hautes qualités des personnes qui seront placées à la tête de l'Administration des Vilayets, se fera un devoir de veiller à ce que les fonctionnaires que le Gouvernement aurait l'intention de désigner possèdent les capacités requises.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 12.
Note d'Abedin Pacha du 5 Juillet, 1880.

Art. 2. Les Valis ainsi nommés ne pourront être révoqués ou changés que dans le cas où ils seront reconnus après constatation légale coupables d'actes contraires aux lois.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre II. Art. 27.

Ils seront nommés pour cinq ans et leurs pouvoirs pourront être renouvelés.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 93, Chap. II, Art. 17.

Art. 3. Les Valis seront assistés par les Adjoints (Mouvins) qui seront Chrétiens, lorsque le Vali sera Musulman, et Musulman lorsque le Vali sera

Chrétien. Les Moavins seront, comme les Valis, nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan.

Ceux-ci seront spécialement délégués par le Vali pour la réception des pétitions des habitants du Vilayet pour la surveillance de la police et des prisons et pour le contrôle de la perception des impôts. Ils seront chargés de l'intérim du vilayet en l'absence du Vali. Les Valis seront assistés d'un Conseil-Général Provincial élu dans des conditions à déterminer et qui aura pour mission de délibérer sur les objets d'utilité publique tels que l'établissement de voies de communication, l'organisation de caisses de crédit agricole, le développement de l'agriculture, du commerce et de l'industrie, et la propagation de l'instruction publique.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 217, Titre I, Chap. III, Arts. 26 et 62 à 75; Vol. iii, p. 25, Titre IV, Chap. I; Vol. v, p. 23.
Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre IV, p. 8, et Art. 71.

Chapitre II.—*Mutessarifs.*

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 14, Art. 303.

Art. 4. Les Mutéssarifs placés à la tête des sandjaks seront nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan. Dans chaque vilayet, un certain nombre de postes de Mutessarifs seront occupés par des Chrétiens. Les Mutessarifs Chrétiens seront placés dans les sandjaks où se trouve le plus grand nombre de Chrétiens. Dans les vilayets où il n'y aurait qu'un seul Mutessarif celui-ci sera nécessairement Chrétien si le Vali est Musulman.

Le Mutessarif sera assisté d'un Moavin qui sera Chrétien si le Mutessarif est Musulman, et vice versa. Le Moavin sera chargé de l'intérim du sandjak en l'absence du Mutéssarif.

Chapitre III.—*Caïmacams.*

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre VII, Art. 132; Titre XVI, Art. 293.

Art. 5. Les Caïmacams seront nommés par Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan sur la désignation du Vali. Ils seront choisis par ce dernier parmi les personnes jouissant de la confiance de la population et remplissant les conditions requises par les Règlements en vigueur. Dans chaque sandjak un certain nombre de postes de Caïmacams seront occupés par des Chrétiens.

Les Caïmacams Chrétiens seront placés dans les cazas où se trouve le plus grand nombre de Chrétiens.

Art. 6. Dans tous les cas le nombre des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacams Chrétiens ne pourra être inférieur au tiers du nombre total des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacams du vilayet.

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Titre VII, Art. 132, p. 17

Le Caïmacam comme le Mutessarif sera assisté d'un Moavin, qui devra être Chrétien si le Caïmacam est Musulman, et vice versa.

Auprès des Mutessarifs et des Caïmacams siégera un Conseil analogue au Conseil-Général Provincial.

Le Conseil du caza sera élu par les Conseils des nahiés, le Conseil du sandjak par les Conseils des cazas.

Le Conseil-Général Provincial sera élu par les Conseils des sandjaks.

Aucun fonctionnaire ne pourra être membre de ces différents Conseils.

Ces Conseils seront présidés respectivement par le Vali, le Mutessarif, et le Caïmacam.

Ils sont composés de quatre membres sans compter le Président, dont deux Musulmans et deux Chrétiens.

Chapitre IV.—*Cercles Communaux ("Nahiés").*

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 20, Titre X, Arts. 154, 168.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 283; Vol. iii, p. 22, Chap. III, Art. 50; Vol. v, pp. 60, 64.

Art. 7. Chaque caza sera subdivisé en un certain nombre de nahiés (cercles communaux).

Le nahié est une subdivision territoriale qui comprendra plusieurs villages, avec leurs propriétés immeubles, terrains, pâturages, et autres terres, dont le plus important sera le chef-lieu.

La circonscription de chaque nahié sera autant que possible fixée de telle façon que les villages d'une même religion soient groupés dans un même nahié; d'une façon générale, il devra être tenu compte des conditions topographiques et ethnographiques, ainsi que des convenances des populations.

Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 12, Art. 103.

Le nahié comprendra 2,000 habitants au moins, et 10,000 au plus.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, pp. 60, 61.
Reglement, Art. 2

Tout groupe de villages faisant partie d'un nahié, et dont les habitants ne seront pas inférieurs en nombre à 1,000, pourra demander à être constitué en nahié séparé, à condition de prendre à sa charge les dépenses de la nouvelle Administration.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 22; Vol. v, p. 61
Règlement, Chap. II, Art. 7.

Art. 8. Chaque nahié sera administré par un Mudir, assisté d'un Conseil élu par la population, et composé de quatre membres au minimum et huit au maximum.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62.
Règlement, Art. 13.
Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 20, Titre X, Art. 151.

Ce Conseil choisira parmi ses membres le Mudir et un Adjoint. Le Mudir devra appartenir à la classe qui forme la majorité des habitants, et l'Adjoint à l'autre classe. Le Conseil aura, en outre, un Secrétaire.

Art. 9. Si les habitants d'un nahié sont d'une même classe, les membres du Conseil seront élus exclusivement parmi les habitants appartenant à cette même classe; si la population du Cercle Communal est mixte, la minorité devra être représentée proportionnellement à son importance relative à condition qu'elle comprenne au moins vingt-cinq maisons.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 13.

Art. 10. Les Mudirs recevront sur le budget du nahié une allocation renouvelable; des appointements fixes seront également alloués au Secrétaire du Conseil.

Un local spécial sera affecté au Conseil du nahié et au siège de l'Administration du Cercle Communal.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 61, Art. 9.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 23, Art. 138; p. 30, Art. 155.

Art. 11. Les membres du Conseil du nahié devront être sujets Ottomans, avoir des intérêts dans le nahié, être âgés de plus de 30 ans, et choisis parmi ceux qui paient à l'État une contribution annuelle de 100 piastres, et qui n'ont pas subi de condamnation.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 61, Art. 10 (textuel).

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 24, Art. 186.

Art. 12. Dès que les membres du Conseil auront choisi parmi eux le Mudir, son nom sera communiqué au Vali, qui le confirmera officiellement après avoir constaté que les conditions légales ont été remplies.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 11.

Art. 13. Les Imams, les prêtres, les professeurs d'écoles, et tous ceux qui se trouvent au service du Gouvernement, ne pourront exercer les fonctions de Mudir.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 12 (textuel).

Art. 14. Les membres du Conseil seront renouvelés par moitié chaque année; les Mudirs resteront en fonctions pendant deux ans. Le Mudir et les membres ne pourront être réélus qu'une seule fois de suite.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 62, Art. 16.

Art. 15. Les attributions du Mudir et des membres du Conseil, ainsi que le mode de leur élection et de leur remplacement, seront réglés suivant les prescriptions du Règlement sur l'Administration des Communes, Articles 14, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, et 26, et du "Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe" (Titre 12).

Aristarchi, Vol. v, pp. 63, 64.

Art. 16. Les villages compris dans le Nâhié auront chacun un Mukhtar; si un village contient plusieurs quartiers, et si les habitants sont divisés en différentes classes, il y aura un Mukhtar pour chaque quartier et pour chaque classe d'habitants.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 24, Art. 60; Vol. v, p. 61, Art. 8.

Art. 17. Aucun village ne pourra, pour partie, relever de deux Cercles Communaux à la fois quels que soient sa position et le nombre de ses habitants.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 60, Art. 4.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Art. 105, p. 15.

Chapitre V.—*Police.*

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 54, Chap. II, Art. 6.

Note d'Aleddin Pacha du 7 Juillet, 1880.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 31, Titre XVII, Arts. 314, 305.

Art. 18. Les agents de police sont recrutés, sans distinction de religion, dans la population du nahié par le Conseil du Cercle Communal, en nombre suffisant pour les besoins locaux et pour la participation au service de la gendarmerie du vilayet.

Note d'Aleddin Pacha du 5 Juillet, 1880.

Art. 19. Les agents de police du nahié sont placés sous les ordres du Mudir. Ils sont commandés par des Chefs qui exercent des fonctions semblables à celles de Tchaouchs et des Ou-Bachis. Ils seront armés, et porteront un uniforme à déterminer dans la suite. Ils seront rétribués sur le budget du nahié; en dehors de leur service ils pourront vaquer à leurs travaux ordinaires.

Note de la Porte du 3 Octobre, 1880.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, Art. 158, p. 22.

Ils seront montés ou non montés selon les besoins du service.

Les non-Musulmans astreints au paiement du Bedel-i-Askerie, qui se trouveront engagés dans la police, seront dispensés du paiement de cette taxe pendant toute la durée de leur service.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe Titre XVII Art. 308, p. 31.

Art. 20. Les agents de police du nahié doivent en premier lieu assurer d'une façon permanente le bon ordre et la sécurité sur le territoire et les routes du nahié. Ils doivent en outre, d'après les ordres du Mudir, contribuer à fournir l'escorte de la Poste et prêter main forte au Mudir pour l'exécution des sentences judiciaires et la mise en vigueur des prescriptions de la loi.

Chapitre VI.—*Gendarmerie.*

Note d'Aleddin Pacha (texte).

Art. 21. Il sera organisé dans chaque province en vertu d'un *Règlement spécial* un corps de gendarmerie provincial dont les officiers et soldats seront choisis parmi toutes les classes des sujets de l'Empire. Le recrutement de la gendarmerie est fait dans le vilayet parmi tous les habitants en état de servir et sans distinction de race ni religion. Elle est recrutée pour les deux tiers parmi les agents de police du nahié moitié parmi les agents Musulmans, moitié parmi les agents appartenant aux communautés non-Musulmanes. L'autre tiers sera composé de Tchaouchs, et de Bach-Tchaouchs, pris parmi les plus capables de l'armée régulière. Au point de vue de la discipline et de l'instruction la gendarmerie dépend du Ministère de la Guerre. Elle est entretenue et soldée aux frais du vilayet. La solde des officiers ne pourra être inférieure à celle des officiers du même grade de l'armée régulière.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 31, Titre XVII, Art 309.

Chapitre VII.—*Prisons.*

Art. 22. Dans les prisons, les individus arrêtés et soumis à la détention préventive ne devront pas être confondus avec les individus incarcérés à la suite d'une condamnation. Les prisons devront offrir aux détenus les conditions indispensables d'hygiène, et on veillera à ce qu'ils ne soient pas soumis à des traitements vexatoires.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 53, Art. 10.

Les Valis nommeront les Directeurs et les gardiens des prisons, parmi lesquels il y aura un certain nombre d'agents de police et de gendarmes.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 53, Art. 11.

Chapitre VIII.—*Comité d'Enquête Préliminaire.*

Art. 23. Les Valis établiront dans les chefs-lieu des vilayets et des sandjaks des Comités d'Enquête Préliminaire composés d'un Président et de deux membres, Musulman et non-Musulman.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 53, Arts. 11 et 12

Ces Comités auront pour mandat de s'enquérir des raisons qui ont motivé l'arrestation des prévenus par les gendarmes et d'ordonner qu'ils soient immédiatement interrogés et emprisonnés dans le cas où l'acte qui leur est attribué serait de nature à entraîner des pénalités édictées par les lois: de faire mettre en liberté immédiate, sous la surveillance de la police, ceux dont la conduite ne motiverait pas l'application de la loi, de veiller à ce que personne ne soit retenu sans nécessité et illégalement en prison. Ils visiteront dans ce but les prisons et surveilleront la situation des prisonniers.

Les Comités adresseront des Rapports qu'ils remettront aux Valis, indiquant parmi les individus amenés à la police, ceux qui ont été mis en liberté et ceux qui ont été maintenus en état d'arrestation.

Chapitre IX.—*Contrôle des Kurdes.*

Note de la Porte du 3 Octobre, 1880.

Art. 24. Pour l'administration des Kurdes nomades, le Vali aura sous ses ordres, dans chaque vilayet, un Achiret-Memouri. Ce fonctionnaire aura le droit d'arrêter les brigands et autres malfaiteurs et de requérir leur comparution devant les Tribunaux ordinaires.

Il devra avoir sous ses ordres une escorte suffisante, et pourra en outre, requérir l'assistance de la police locale.

Un certain nombre de fonctionnaires placés sous son autorité accompagneront chaque tribu dans ses migrations annuelles. Ils exerceront sur elle un pouvoir de police, feront arrêter tous les malfaiteurs et les déféreront aux Tribunaux ordinaires. Les limites des campements et pâturages des Kurdes nomades seront nettement déterminées. Les migrations ne devront pas être la cause de dommages pour les habitants des territoires traversés ou occupés provisoirement par les tribus nomades. Si celles-ci commettent quelque empiètement ou excès sur les biens ou les personnes des villageois, toute migration leur sera désormais interdite.

Exemple: Des Circassiens du Caza de Azizie au Vilayet d'Adana, 1880.

Les Règlements existants sur le port d'armes seront strictement appliqués à toute la population Kurde, tant sédentaire que nomade. On s'efforcera d'inculquer aux populations nomades les principes de la vie sédentaire en les accoutumant aux travaux des champs, et à cet effet on leur assignera des lots de terrain dans les localités où leur installation ne pourra nuire à la tranquillité et au bien-être des populations sédentaires.

Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 18, Art. 137.

Le droit d'élection et d'éligibilité n'appartient pas aux individus faisant partie des populations non sédentaires ou qui ne sont pas établies à titre définitif et permanent sur le territoire d'un mahié.

Cf. les résultats obtenus par trois Commissions en 1880.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 281, Chap. I, Art. 63.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 23, Titre XII, Art. 179.

Chapitre X.—*Cavalerie Hamidié.*

Art. 25. Dans le cas où il serait jugé nécessaire de se servir des régiments de la cavalerie Hamidié en dehors des périodes d'instruction prescrites par les Règlements en vigueur, ces troupes ne pourront être employées et cantonnées que conjointement avec les troupes de l'armée régulière dont elle ne devront par dépasser le tiers.

En temps ordinaire et en dehors du service, les cavaliers Hamidiés ne doivent porter ni uniformes, ni armes. Dans les mêmes cas ils sont justiciables des Tribunaux ordinaires ainsi qu'il est déjà prescrit dans les Règlements Hamidiés en conformité avec les prescriptions en usage pour les Rédifs (Code Militaire Ottoman, Article 14).

Chapitre XI.—*Question des Titres de Propriété.*

Art. 26. Des Commissions spéciales composées d'un Président et de quatre membres, deux Musulmans et deux Chrétiens, seront chargés de reviser les titres et droits de propriété et de redresser les

injustices et les irrégularités qu'elles pourront constater.

Une Commission spéciale élaborera le mode le plus propre à garantir dans l'avenir les droits de propriété.

Chapitre XII.—*Perception des Dimes.*

Art. 27. Tous les impôts y compris la dîme, seront perçus directement sous l'autorité du Mudir par des Percepteurs élus par les Conseils des nahiés.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, pp. 30, 51, 63.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 21, Titre X, Arts. 160, 163, 164.

Tous les habitants du nahié sont solidairement responsables du paiement de la totalité de l'impôt qui lui est assigné.

Art. 28. L'affermage des dîmes et la corvée demeurent abolis.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 81.

Chaque centre administratif, en commençant par le nahié, prélèvera sur les impôts qu'il aura recueillis les sommes nécessaires aux dépenses de son Administration, d'après un budget fixé et approuvé par le Gouvernement. De même l'Administration financière du vilayet prélèvera sur le total des impôts de la province les sommes nécessaires à l'administration du vilayet, y compris les dépenses des travaux publics et de l'instruction publique.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 33, Art. 104.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 10, Arts. 83, 147, et 168.
Note de la Porte, le 3 Octobre, 1880.

La population ne pourra en aucun cas être tenue de fournir gratuitement soit à la troupe, soit aux fonctionnaires en service, le logement et les provisions nécessaires à leur entretien.

Note d'Aleddin Pacha.

Dans le cas de vente forcée pour non paiement des impôts, on veillera strictement à ne pas priver la population des objets de première nécessité ni de ses instruments de travail.

Chapter XIII.—*Justice.*

Art. 29. Il y aura dans chacune des localités du nahié un Conseil des Anciens présidé par le Mukhtar et dont la mission sera de concilier à l'amiable les contestations entre les habitants de la localité.

Aristarchi, Vol. iii, p. 34, Art. 107.

Art. 30. Il y aura dans chaque caza, proportionnellement au nombre des nahiés, un nombre suffisant de Juges de Paix nommés par le Ministre de la Justice sur la désignation du Vali. L'un d'eux devra nécessairement résider au chef-lieu du caza. Le tiers des Juges de Paix du caza devront être Chrétiens. Les Juges de Paix Chrétiens seront

placés dans les centres où la population Chrétienne est la plus nombreuse.

Art. 31. Le Juge de Paix connaîtra—

1. En matière criminelle sans appel, des contraventions passibles de peines de simple police et à charge d'appel les délits n'entraînant pas une peine de plus de 500 piastres d'amende et de trois mois de prison.

2. En matière civile sans appel, toute action personnelle, civile et commerciale, jusqu'à concurrence de 1,000 piastres. Et à charge d'appel, les mêmes actions jusqu'à concurrence de 5,000 piastres.

Art. 32. Le Juge de Paix tiendra aussi son Tribunal en conciliation. Il pourra sur la demande des parties désigner des Arbitres pour décider des contestations dont l'objet dépasserait 5,000 piastres. Dans le cas de sentence arbitrale, les parties renonceront à tout appel.

Art. 33. Les Juges de Paix tenant lieu de Tribunaux de cazas, les appels de leurs décisions en matière civile seront portés devant le Tribunal du sandjak.

Art. 34. Les condamnations à la prison prononcées en dernier ressort par les Juges de Paix seront purgées dans la prison du caza. Les Mudirs devront prêter assistance aux Juges de Paix pour l'exécution des sentences au civil comme au criminel.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, pp. 202, 233, Art. 11.
Projet de Loi sur les Vilayets de la Turquie d'Europe, p. 28, Art. 238.

Art. 35. Les Tribunaux du caza étant supprimés, les Tribunaux du sandjak connaîtront des affaires civiles dépassant 5,000 piastres, et des appels des décisions des Juges de Paix en matière civile. Ils n'auront qu'une Chambre Civile, la Chambre Criminelle devant être remplacée par la Cour d'Assises ambulante. Les Tribunaux du sandjak sont composés d'un Président Magistrat diplômé, nommé par le Ministre de la Justice, et de deux membres choisis par le Vali sur une liste dressée par les Conseils des sandjaks.

Aristarchi, Vol. ii, p. 287, Art. 7.

Art. 36. Les sections criminelles des Tribunaux du sandjak sont ainsi remplacées par des Cours d'Assises ambulantes. Les Cours d'Assises sont composées d'un Magistrat Président pris parmi les membres de la Cour Supérieure du vilayet. Il leur sera adjoint deux membres désignés par la Cour d'Appel, parmi les Juges de Paix du sandjak, dont l'un Musulman et l'autre Chrétien. Les Juges de Paix recevront une indemnité spéciale pendant la tournée de la Cour d'Assises.

Note d'Abedin Pacha.

Art. 37. La Cour d'Assises siégera tour à tour

dans tous les cazás, y compris le chef-lieu du vilayet et les chefs-lieux des sandjaks où sa présence sera reconnue nécessaire. Elle connaîtra, en appel, des décisions des Juges de Paix en matière de délit et sans appel, des crimes ainsi que des délits entraînant une peine de plus de 500 piastres d'amende et plus de trois mois de prison.

Les sentences rendues par la Cour d'Assises en matière de crime ne sont susceptibles que du recours en cassation.

Art. 38. En arrivant au caza le Président de la Cour d'Assises se fera remettre par le Juge d'Instruction un État des causes instruites susceptibles de lui être déférées immédiatement, et un État des causes en cours d'instruction. S'il constate au sujet de ces dernières quelques irrégularités ou des lenteurs non-motivées, il adressera immédiatement un Rapport au Ministère de la Justice.

A son arrivée au caza, comme à son départ, la Cour d'Assises visitera les prisons, s'enquerra de la situation des prisonniers, et vérifiera les écrous.

Art. 39. La Cour Supérieure du Vilayet est composée d'un Président et d'un nombre de membres suffisant pour connaître des affaires civiles qui lui sont dévolues, et pour fournir des Présidents aux Cours d'Assises ambulantes.

Elle fonctionne en matière civile, comme Cour d'Appel, et en matière criminelle comme Cour d'Assises. Elle est régulièrement constituée dès qu'elle réunit deux membres et un Président. Elle comprend en outre un Procureur-Général et un nombre suffisant de Substituts.

Art. 40. Les décisions des Juges de Paix, et les Jugements des Tribunaux de tout ordre seront libellés en langue Turque. Le texte Turc sera suivant les localités et les parties en cause, accompagné d'une traduction en langue Arménienne.

Aristarchi, Vol. v, p. 56, Art. 26.

Inclosure 3 in No. 182.

Joint Instruction to Dragomans.

THE Chief Dragoman of the British Embassy is instructed by Sir Philip Currie to deliver to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan a plan of reforms to be introduced into the eastern provinces of Asia Minor which Her Britannic Majesty's Government has thought it desirable to communicate to the Imperial Government.

This plan consists of a project of administrative, financial, and judicial reforms, conceived in accordance with the existing laws of the Empire, and of a Memorandum, in which are pointed out the measures which are considered indispensable to facilitate the practical working of these reforms, and to secure their exact execution.

These two documents constitute, in the opinion of Her Britannic Majesty's Government, the minimum of the measures and reforms which it is necessary to apply in the provinces that have been disturbed by recent occurrences, with a view to re-establishing order and security, and guaranteeing the Armenian population against a recurrence of the late disorders.

Her Britannic Majesty's Government, being convinced of the value and necessity of the reforms now presented, considers that they should be examined without delay, in order that they may be immediately put into practice. The British Ambassador requests, therefore, that he may receive information at as early a date as possible of the arrangements which His Imperial Majesty the Sultan may decide upon in order to insure the application of the measures and reforms contained in the accompanying Memorandum and project.

Pera, May 11, 1895.

No. 183.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 178.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 15, 1895, 8:15 P.M.

THE Sultan to-day sent Munir Bey to inform the three Ambassadors that His Imperial Majesty will shortly send an answer as to the reform proposals, which he is now examining.

Munir Bey said that on the whole the Sultan took a favourable view of the proposals, though he would take exception to certain clauses. On my colleagues inquiring which these clauses were, he replied that the points to which the Sultan objected most strongly were the reduction of the number of vilayets and the appointment of the Valis for a period of five years. He said that we might expect an answer the week after next.

The general impression is that the Sultan will eventually accept our proposals, but we intend to press for a definite answer to be given before the end of next week.

No. 184.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received May* 15.)

(No. 179.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 15, 1895.

HER Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout telegraphs to me to-day, with reference to the disturbances at Tyre, that seventeen Christians were wounded, one dangerously, and seven Moslems.

The Vali, who is now investigating the matter, immediately on his arrival arrested the examining Magistrate and the nephew of the ex-Sub-Governor, besides several others, but no Christians.

No. 185.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 47.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1895.

HER Majesty's Government propose to communicate, confidentially, to the Austrian, German, and Italian Governments, the scheme of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Turkey, which has been submitted to the Porte by your Excellency and your French and Russian colleagues.

Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and St. Petersburgh have been instructed to inquire whether the French and Russian Governments have any objection to this course.

No. 186.

*The Earl of Kimberley to the Marquis of Dufferin.**

(No. 55.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May* 16, 1895.

WE propose to communicate, confidentially, to the Austrian, German, and Italian Governments, the scheme of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Turkey, which has been submitted to the Porte by our Ambassadors at Constantinople.

I request your Excellency to inquire whether the Government to which you are accredited have any objection to such a course.

No. 187.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 180.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 17, 1895, 10 A.M.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 47 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to state that our plan of reforms was communicated to the Austrian, German, and Italian Ambassadors on the 11th instant.

No. 188.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 17.)

(No. 182.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 17, 1895, 5·30 P.M.

MY despatch No. 322 of the 16th instant, inclosing Mr. Graves' despatch No. 79.

In consequence of Mr. Graves' representations as to the importance of excluding the nomad Kurds from the villages in the Sassoon district during the ensuing summer, I asked the Russian and French Ambassadors to make a joint representation with me on the subject to the Porte. My colleagues having agreed to do so, we ordered our Dragomans to go to the Porte this afternoon and make a joint communication, urging that the most stringent orders should be given, without delay, that no Kurds should be allowed to enter the district in question.

No. 189.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 181.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 18, 1895, 6·45 P.M.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van informs me, by telegraph, of the arrival at that place of Mr. Howard, Reuter's correspondent. Mr. Howard has travelled to Tehran through Caucasia, and thence to Van viâ Tabreez, Ourmi, and Khoi. He had

* Also to Sir V. Lascelles (No. 80).

come much into contact with the revolutionary Armenians, but, in his opinion, they are not likely for the present to make any movement in the direction of Van.

Mr. Hallward reports that an Armenian agent was sent from Van to Persia about six weeks ago to watch the revolutionary Armenians, but he supposes that the Turkish Consuls at Khoi and Ourmi keep their Government fully informed as to their movements.

The American doctor in Ourmi, who is intimate with the Kurds, told Mr. Howard that a son of the late Sheikh Obeidullah, who lives at the Palace at Constantinople, has recently informed his brother, living in Shemdinan, that the Kurds must be ready for war, and that he would be given a command in the Hamidiehs.

Mr. Howard found only very few Sassoon refugees in the Caucasus, and none at all in Persia.

No. 190.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 183.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 18, 1895.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 179 of the 15th instant, Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout telegraphs that the Vali has returned from Tyre, bringing with him twenty-three prisoners, fourteen Mussulmans, and nine Christians. The police force at Tyre has been increased, and a few soldiers stationed there to insure tranquillity

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No. 191.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 18.)

(No. 56.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, May* 18, 1895.

PRINCE LOBANOFF has no objection to the course of action proposed in your Lordship's telegram No. 80 of the 16th instant.

No. 192.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 194.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 18, 1895.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 255, Confidential, of the 23rd ultimo, forwarding a communication from the Armenian Patriarch relative to the state of affairs in the Vilayet of Sivas.

I shall be glad if you can ascertain whether the attack on the French priest, mentioned as having occurred at Tokat, was reported to the French Ambassador at Constantinople, and whether any action was taken by his Excellency in consequence.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 193.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 195.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May* 18, 1895.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 297 of the 7th instant, stating the circumstances in which you have authorized Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond to show his despatches confidentially to his colleagues, and I approve the course pursued by your Excellency in this matter.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 194.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 300.)
Constantinople, May 11, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting various cases of abduction by Moslems of Christian girls in the Province of Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 194.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 23, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting various cases of abduction by Moslems of Christian girls in that province, for which no redress seems to be obtainable under the present civil and military authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 194.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, April 15, 1895.

Sir,

AN Armenian, named Hagop, from Melazguird (Bitlis Vilayet), came here about a fortnight ago to try to recover two of his nieces who were carried off by a Turk. The elder one has become Moslem and married a Turk; the younger one, a child of about 10, is in the house of a Turk here. She was brought before the Vali in the presence of the Bishop and declared she wished to stay where she was. The Bishop claimed she should be given up, on the ground that she was too young to decide for herself, and that she might easily have been frightened into making the declaration she did. The Vali, however, refused to give her up, and she remains with the Turk.

Five Armenian girls and one married woman have lately been abducted by Kurds in the district of Bashkalé alone.

Neither the Armenian girl from Kasrig, nor the daughter of Daniel, Priest of Arrag (*vide* my despatch of the 19th March), have been restored to their parents.

The Kurds in this as in other respects enjoy complete immunity, and appear likely to do so as long as Zekki Pasha is in command of the 4th Army Corps, and Bahri Pasha is Governor of this vilayet. The former protects the Hamidié Kurds, but the latter protects other Kurdish and Turkish bad characters as well. Thus at Shattakh and Mukus, where there are no Hamidiés, the state of things is just as bad as in the other districts. Kurdish robbers, who have been well known to the Government for years past, systematically levy blackmail on the Armenian villages, and do so with the connivance of the authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 195.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 301.)
Constantinople, May 11, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting the ill-treatment of prisoners at Van and the dispatch of priests to Constantinople.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 195.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 23, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency of the 14th February last, I have the honour to transmit herewith copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the subject of the treatment of Armenian prisoners in Van gaol.

Mr. Hallward also reports, in connection with the particular case of ill-usage which he describes, the removal of four priests under escort to Constantinople, one of them, named Sarkis, being under sentence of death for complicity in an alleged plot against the life of the Vali, Bakri Pasha, in 1892. These four priests have already passed through Erzeroum on their way to Constantinople, and I am able to add from what I learn here that the case of one of them, Der Ohannes, of Karatchoban, is a peculiarly hard one of mistaken identity, his age and infirmities being such as to render it almost impossible for him to have committed the offence with which he is charged.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 195.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, April 16, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE already had occasion to call your attention to the conduct of the police officials with regard to the prisoners here (*vide* my despatch of the 8th January last). An incident occurred on the 13th instant which further illustrates the manner in which they discharge their duties.

A Kurd, named Ami, who has been in prison since 1891 for murder, got up a quarrel in prison with a certain Maksabedian, an Armenian, formerly a member of the Administrative Council, who was condemned to death in November 1893 on a charge of inciting to murder the Vali. The Kurd attacked him violently, hitting him on the head with a large pitcher; at the same time, other Kurds in the prison joined in and attacked seven or eight other Armenians who were in the same ward, doing them more or less serious injury. The Armenians called to the prison attendants who were outside, but they paid no attention at first, and when at last they did come in, they are said to have joined the Kurds in beating the Armenians. Maksabedian sustained serious injuries, and had to be removed to the prison hospital; the others, I understand, were not so much hurt.

This affair has made some impression in the town, as it is considered a striking proof of the ill-will of the Government, and especially of the Vali, towards the Armenians, and of their contempt for law and order in cases where Armenians are concerned.

A few days before this occurred Garabed, of Selmanis, who had also been condemned to death on the same charge as Maksabedian, died suddenly in prison. This circumstance makes the Armenians suspect that the Vali connived at, if he did not instigate, the attack on Maksabedian, as another Armenian, who was also condemned to death on the same charge, Sarkis, a priest of the village of Avarak, was ordered to be sent to Constantinople, and started thither under escort with three other priests, Kevork and Daniel, of Adeljevaz, and Ohannes, of Karachoban, on the 8th instant, and it is thought

that he may make disclosures unfavourable to the officials concerned respecting the charge on which they were condemned. As Garabed and Maksabedian are the two other persons chiefly concerned, the Vali is suspected of having wished to get them out of the way. I do not know how far these suspicions may be well grounded, but in any case the charges against these men appear to have been trumped up, and based on no good evidence. The facts were as follows:—

At the end of November 1892 an Armenian, named Najar Kevork, of the village of Avarak, was arrested for annoying the Vali by prancing about on a horse in front of him as he was driving home from the town. He was drunk at the time; a broken old revolver was found on him, and he was therefore accused of attempting to assassinate the Vali. He was, however, promised pardon on condition of incriminating certain other Armenians. He then said that there was a plot to murder the Vali organized by Migherditch Maksabedian, the priest Sarkis, and Garabed, Headman of Setmanis village, and that he was employed by them to carry it out. Five other Armenians were also implicated. Kevork, Maksabedian, Sarkis, and Garabed were condemned to death, four others to six years' and one to five years' imprisonment.

Of the other three priests who have been sent to Constantinople, Kevork and Daniel were accused of getting complaints against the Government signed in various villages, and going to Alexandropol and other places in Russia to ask for Russian protection. Ohannes, who is an old and infirm man, was accused of assisting them in getting the Petition signed. The charge against Daniel and Kevork was made, I believe, by a servant whom they had dismissed from the monastery of Skanchelakorz where they lived, and they were arrested last May. I am told they never went to Russia at all, so there does not appear to be much foundation for the charge.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 196.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 302. Confidential.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 11, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, containing extracts from letters respecting the Sassoon massacres and the condition of Bitlis.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 196.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 24, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch to your Excellency of the 11th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith copies of a further extract from a letter written by the same lady, and containing some more interesting statements furnished by survivors of the Sassoon massacres directly to the writer.

I have also the honour to inclose an extract from a private letter from one of the missionaries at Bitlis describing the state of affairs in that city and its neighbourhood, besides giving some details as to the present condition of the devastated region of Sassoon, and the alleged brutal treatment of the returned refugees by an emissary of the Moush authorities.

I am furnishing Mr. Shipley with copies of these documents for the use of the Delegates with the Commission of Inquiry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 196.

Extract from Private Letter, dated Moush, February 15 (27), 1895.

AT Hadadvorig I saw a man by the name of Rasho, from Hitenk, who spoke at length about the ruthless waste of property; said that kerosene oil was used to facilitate the burning of the houses; that most of the villagers fled, but the soldiers utterly destroyed the villages.

Two of Rasho's family were killed.

Meghirditch, a native of Hakmank, staying temporarily at Hadadvorig, said: "There were thirty-two in our house; five were killed, two died of fright, and I do not know where the rest are. My brother Caspar fell, wounded by a bayonet. Afterwards they put fire on him, and he died. His children, a boy and a girl, died of fright. I saw a nephew killed with a gun. The soldiers stood Kevon and Stepan up together, and shot at them as a mark; one was killed and the other fled. They shot after him, and he is now badly wounded.

"When the soldiers blew the trumpets and began to strike they seized my nephew's wife, and, removing a yet unborn child from her, slew it. We buried the poor woman; but they took the body out of the grave and left it unburied."

Shanan, a woman from Talvorig, told her sad story as follows:—

Of the thirty who composed her family, her husband, his brother, and two others were known to have been killed. The soldiers carried her handsome little son of about three years away captive. An Armenian afterwards saw the boy, and offered a cow and three sheep as a ransom, but it was rejected. Shanan had a beautiful daughter of about eight years with her. I asked her how she escaped. The mother said at the time the village was attacked the girl was caring for sheep in a distant pasture, and thus was safe.

A woman from Aghpig, a village of forty houses, told me she escaped by telling the soldiers, "I will be a Turk and follow you." She said she saw them kill her husband, and when a soldier seized her, she appealed to an officer close by, imploring him for her life. He said, "Let her go!"—They beat her severely, took most of her clothes, and then allowed her to run away. She said she could hardly get on because of the slain who covered the ground, and that sometimes she had to step on the corpses. She hid among rocks, and finally escaped, but was sick for a month from the effects of the cruel beating she received. She said that she knew several women who, having hid themselves and their children behind trees and rocks, were compelled to choke the younger children when they began to cry from hunger, lest the soldiers should hear the cries and discover them. Sometimes, too, the distressed mothers would fill the children's mouths with dirt to drown their cries, especially when they saw any one drawing near.

From a reliable source I learned that a woman by the name of Shakee, rather than deny the Christian faith or submit to the gross insults of the soldiers, threw herself down from a high precipice on the side of the Andok mountain, and that three others speedily followed her example.

I saw one woman, and heard of another, who was begging in the streets of Moush, whose reason had evidently been shattered by the terrible experiences they had passed through.

* * * * * *

Some of the harrowing stories we have heard have been told by the soldiers themselves; not a few of whom claim to have been very unwilling agents, but compelled to obey the commands of their superiors. Another soldier, on his return to Moush after the awful slaughter, gave the following incident:—

In passing by a field of wheat he noticed a little motion among the grain, and, drawing near, found three little boys huddled together. He told them not to be afraid, he would take care of them. Upon reporting the case to his superior officer, he received permission to bring the boys into camp, and make a little booth-like shelter for them. He fed them several days, but after about a week had passed, on going to carry them bread one day, he found that they had been wantonly murdered.

Inclosure 3 in No. 196.

Extract from Private Letter, dated Bitlis, April 9, 1895.

ON the 1st instant Farso, a Kurdish tyrant, came to the large village of Koolteeg, about three hours east of the city, to get some cloth that he had ordered. He called on a young fellow to carry it to his village of Khumash. The fellow showed some reluctance, but said he would get his mocassins ready. Provoked by the reluctance or the length of time it took to get ready Farso beat the young fellow, drawing blood from the head. Another villager tried to mediate, when the Kurd took his gun, put in a cartridge, and fired at the man, but, fortunately, instead of hitting him hit a dog instead, and killed it. He then said he would bring on twenty of his followers, and do to Koolteeg as Talori had been treated. A man succeeded in getting here from the village that evening, and reported matters to the Governor. Four zaptiehs were at once sent, but Farso turned them off by saying that he knew where the villagers had hid fifty rifles, and he was awaiting orders from the Governor to seize them. Of course this proved to be without foundation, but the Kurd got off scot-free.

A Kurd, Aday by name, of Hezan, is a criminal who was seized some time ago, and probably would have been sentenced to several years' imprisonment, but he was released and sent to Hezan to secure an address of thanksgiving to the Crown from the Armenians of that region. He was unsuccessful in that, but it seems evident that he was a party in another movement. He and the Hezan Sheikh (successor of Jaladin, the famous bandit about Bayazid during the last war), last week collected some 500 armed men. The Armenians were alarmed, and came to the city and reported matters. The Sheikh explained the presence of the men by saying he had got them together to hunt wild boars that infest the region. This, however, seems too transparent, since other years not more than 100 men are collected, and many of these are Armenians, while this year no Armenians were called. The Government sent fifteen soldiers over there, and ordered the Kurds to disperse, and do no harm to the Armenians, else they would be severely punished. The Kaimakam of the region, Nouri Bey, has also been called here, so it looks as if a threatening disaster has been averted. While Omar Bey makes no progress in making reforms, he certainly seems to be trying to repress disturbances that might arise. But it is a question how long he will be able to resist the prevailing excitement. In spite of the order not to wear daggers, I notice that some Turks carry them openly.

Last Tuesday and Saturday two more hearings were given to the Armenian Notables, and two witnesses for the prosecution testified, but their testimony did not make much impression. One denied that a statement produced was the same which he had signed; the charges made by the other were chiefly directed against a person not among the prisoners.

Last summer, a Chief of the Bushkotli Kurds carried off from Sassoon a brother and sister of from 9 to 11 years old, and subsequently sold them for 150 piastres to the son of Asatneno, of Sert. The latter lately intended to send the children to the Mosoul region, and the Armenians, hearing of it, have tried to get the Government to interfere. I do not know the result.

I hear from a reliable source that in the devastated region there are now in Semal 20 houses, in Shenik 2, in the whole of Gulin 21, in Aggik 40, in Eshkhentzor 60, and in the whole of Talori 7. It is estimated that there are 1,000 inhabitants in all that region, only 300 of whom are adult males. A little help has reached them, but a drop in the bucket when we think not only of them, but also of those in the Moosh Plain and in the Diarbekir region. One Vaisee Effendi went from Moosh to Shatakh with forty zaptiehs to try and get some Address signed by the people. They refused to sign what they could not understand, so they were beaten, women raped, and one man was hung from the roof by his heels. Five men were brought to Moosh. From thirty to forty women followed, declaring they would share the fate of the men. The soldiers in vain tried to beat them back with their gun-stocks, but they came on to Moosh, where they were also exposed to insults.

No. 197.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 204.)

Constantinople, May 11, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, containing the depositions of a Turkish muleteer, Ali Gulamnen Oghlou, and insisting on the necessity of the Commission visiting Ghelié-Guzan.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 197.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, April 26, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a statement which has been obtained from a Turkish muleteer, who accompanied the troops during the military operations in Sassoon last year, by the same gentlemen who furnished me with the inclosures in my despatches of the 2nd and 18th March. I am furnishing copy of this statement to Mr. Shipley.

The points of present importance in this statement appear to be: the absolute denial of the allegation of Government witnesses before the Commission at Moush that the Sassoon roads were blocked last year by Armenian brigands and rebels; the horrible story of the flaying alive of the Armenian Shero at Ghelié-Guzan by orders of Colonel Ismaïl Bey and the Sheikh of Zillan; and the report that measures were taken by the authorities to remove the traces of massacre at Ghelié-Guzan.

In the last connection, further information has been gathered within the last day or two by my informants from an Armenian who had visited Ghelié-Guzan within the last month, and stated that two of the pits in which the massacred Armenians had been thrown were cleared out by the authorities before the winter, and it was expected that the remaining one would be similarly dealt with. My Russian colleague told me that he also has had some confirmation of these statements from a semi-official source; and, in view of the urgency of the matter, my colleagues and I agreed to send to our respective Ambassadors an identical telegram this day, pointing out the necessity of orders being given to the Commission to visit Ghelié-Guzan before these proofs of massacre can be effaced by the local authorities.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 197.

Deposition of Turkish Muleteer, Ali Gulamnen Oghlou, of Moush.

DEPONENT is a muleteer by trade, and about 40 years of age. He has travelled the Sassoon road to Diarbekir for seven years past, and last year went through early in May, and returned about the end of May (o.s.), meeting the soldiers on their way up to Merghémouzan.

It was not true that the roads were closed by rebel Armenians; the only people who ever interfered with the traffic were the Bekiranli Kurds.

Moush was provisioned chiefly from the Shattokh villages, and communications were always open. The villagers, though not in revolt, were anxious, because they expected a Kurd attack after the events of 1893, and they carried their arms—flint-lock guns—in case they were attacked. The taxes of Ghelié-Guzan, Seund, and Shenik were sold as usual in 1894, a proof that the villagers were not in rebellion against the Government.

Later on, returning from a journey to Erzeroum, he was hired by Government to carry ammunition-boxes into Sassoon with ten horses. Other muleteers carried loose powder and ball for the use of the Kurds. He went with the 4th battalion of the 32nd Regiment. When he got to Ghelié-Guzan it was already sacked and destroyed, as well as the neighbouring villages. Ghelié-Guzan consisted of several separate quarters which

contained in all 320 houses. The camp of the soldiers was full of loot from the villages.

He did not see the massacre of Der Ohannes and his party, though he heard all about it. Nor did he witness the nightly slaughter of prisoners, not being allowed to approach the place. He was kept away, not being a soldier, and only saw some of the corpses afterwards—perhaps 160 or 170 in number, and chiefly men and small children, not women.

The massacres continued for fifteen nights. Some of the soldiers said that the Kurds did the killing, but he knew this was not true. The Sheikh of Zillan was at the camp, always with Colonel Ismail Bey. He knew him to be a bad man, and a mischief-maker.

At Ghelié-Guzan, an Armenian named Shero, a relative of Resho, the Headman of Ghelidsan, who had resisted the soldiers, was ordered by the Colonel and the Zillan Sheikh to be made an example of. He was tied up to a post, and flayed alive from the neck down. He was a very big and strong man, and survived in this state nearly three days. Deponent saw him thus, while he was still alive, and again after his death.

Thence he was sent to Talvorig with two companies of the 4th battalion, 32nd Regiment, one company of rifles, half a squadron of dismounted cavalry, half a company of gendarmes, and two mountain guns, under the command of Ali Effendi. Besides ammunition-boxes he carried sixteen cases of petroleum, which were not used, and were brought back by him to Ghelié-Guzan on his return.

With the troops were a large body of Kurds, 7,000 or 8,000 strong. The Kurds went in advance to attack the villages, while the troops fired from the heights on the flying Armenians. A number of women and children took refuge in the church at Talori, which was bombarded. It took fire, and at last the roof fell in, Kurds and soldiers preventing the inmates from escaping. There was great slaughter at Talori village, but from the other villages, six in number, of the Talori group, many succeeded in escaping as they were difficult to surround. Many women perished in the oak-wood of Talori, which was set on fire. While the troops were still engaged at the oak-wood, he was sent back to Moush for more ammunition, as the troops meant to go on to Hazo. He returned to Moush, and took the fresh ammunition-boxes, but was stopped by the quarantine cordon, as cholera had broken out. There he heard of the arrival of the Mushir at Ghelié-Guzan, and the stoppage of the slaughter.

Accounts varied as to the numbers killed. Some said 5,000, others 6,000, others 8,000, but he cannot say what the true figure should be. He heard subsequently that, by orders of Government, the corpses were taken out of the big pit at Ghelié-Guzan and scattered before the snow fell. Lately he has heard at Moush that all the other trenches have been emptied, and the traces of massacre removed.

Deponent spoke reluctantly, wishing to minimize matters, and clearly showed his disapproval and even horror of what he had witnessed. He thought the visitation of cholera was God's judgment on the soldiers for their cruelty.

No. 198.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 305.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 13, 1895.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 114 of the 16th March, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond respecting the rearrest of Armenian prisoners at Amassia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 198.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, May* 8, 1895.

YOUR Excellency's despatch of the ultimo was communicated by me to Dr. Jewett, at Sivas, who in answer reports as follows:—

"There were 210 political prisoners in prison at Amassia. On an order from the Sultan, that prisoners who were simply accused of conspiring against him should be liberated, 175 prisoners were released on the 14th October, 1894. The rest were to be tried by the Military Court at Tokat. Of these, one old man died, and two who were apparently insane and had long refused food also died. That left thirty-two to be tried at Tokat. Of these twenty-seven were acquitted, and five are still in prison at Tokat. Of the 175 released in October 1894, five were rearrested on the 20th November. The cause of their arrest was not made known to them. They were detained a few days, and then sent to their birth-places and told not to return to Amassia. A few days later fifteen or twenty more were rearrested and discharged again in a short time. It is commonly said that the object of their rearrest was to get money from them. I am assured that on the 27th April there were no political prisoners at Amassia."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 199.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 307.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 11, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum which I have received from Mr. Block, reporting that, in a conversation which he had had with Said Pasha on the subject of the representations made by Her Majesty's Embassy, based on Reports received from Consular officers, with regard to Armenian oppression and misgovernment, his Excellency showed him several letters from the Grand Vizier in which his Highness, after inquiries which he had made by telegraph from the various local authorities, absolutely denied the truth of the Reports communicated.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 199.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

THE Foreign Minister has shown me several letters from the Grand Vizier in which his Highness states he has made inquiries by telegraph from various provincial Governors with respect to the representations made by the Embassy, based on Consular Reports, upon Armenian oppression and misgovernment.

The daughter of the priest Daniel has accepted Mahommedanism in the proper legal form.

The disturbance at Chipod was an affray between two villages caused by a dispute about village pasturage lands. A Major of Gendarmerie, the Juge d'Instruction, and an Armenian member of the local Court visited the village, took steps to restore order, and reported that no violence or arbitrary measures were resorted to.

There is no truth whatsoever in the story of the three men and a boy of Aghpih, Sassoon district, who had difficulties in presenting petitions to the Commission, and were exiled.

There is no truth in the report of disturbances between Mutualis and Christians at Sidon and Lattakia, and the authorities are doing all that they should to maintain order.

There is no truth in the statement that the villagers of Keghi are beaten and tortured by the authorities for refusal to pay taxes; the taxes in that district and elsewhere are collected in a legal manner.

The facts furnished by Mr. Barnham are also incorrect with regard to death of prisoners and frivolous charges against Armenians. Some of the Armenian prisoners died from natural causes, some on returning to their villages.

I said to Said Pasha that it was most unfortunate that everything we told the Porte for their guidance as a friendly "démarche" was looked upon by the Porte and the authorities as a hostile representation, and was always met with a flat denial, and

the only conclusion to be arrived at was that either all Her Majesty's Consular officers were perverters of the truth, or all the authorities of the Porte were so.

Said Pasha privately admitted that our representations were looked upon as hostile, and said he wished they were received in the spirit they were tendered, but he thought, at the same time, that many of the stories reported by our Consuls were exaggerations from Armenian sources.

No. 200.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 309.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 14, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond in regard to the posting up of placards at Sivas.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 200.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, May 7, 1895.*

I HAVE this day received a telegram from Dr. Jewett, at Sivas, worded thus:—

"Placards like former ones were posted all over the city last night."

He alludes, I believe, to the placards of January 1892.

I have, &c.

(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 201.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 310.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 14, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 260 of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout regarding the disturbances at Lattakia, and the calling out of two battalions of Redifs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 201.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, May 1, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 10th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit to your Excellency herewith a copy of a report of the British Vice-Consul at Lattakia relating to the mobilization of two battalions of Redifs in that district.

I have, &c.

(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 201.

Vice-Consul Vitales to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

M. le Consul-Général, *Lattaquié, le 26 Avril, 1895.*

ME référant à mon rapport du 17 courant, j'ai l'honneur de vous informer que le 1er Bataillon du 75e Régiment Rédifs du 5e Corps d'Armée étant appelé sous les armes, déjà 1,700 hommes sont enrôlés en cette ville et qu'on est sur le point d'appeler le 2e Bataillon du 94e Régiment Rédifs du Caïmacamlic de Sahioun, dont le nombre pourrait aussi dépasser celui de 800 hommes, nombre ordinaire d'un bataillon de Rédifs.

Les officiers militaires et les employés des autorités civiles ne cessent pas d'assurer ces Rédifs qu'ils ne sont appelés que pour apprendre de nouvelles manœuvres que le Binbachi Izzet Bey (officier d'État-Major du Séraskerat à Constantinople) est chargé de leur enseigner.

Cependant, j'ai appris que les Moukhtars des villages ont reçu l'ordre de déclarer chacun le nombre des mulets de son village et de s'engager par écrit de présenter ces animaux à la première demande que les autorités lui feront.

Ceci porte à supposer que ces Rédifs seront envoyés par la voie de terre à l'intérieur du côté d'Alep, contrairement aux assertions des dites autorités.

D'un autre côté l'on s'étonne que la caisse du Gouvernement de Lattaquié n'est autorisée de payer à ces Rédifs que la faible somme de 25,000 piastres, qui ne pourrait suffire qu'à peine à leur payer un acompte de leurs salaires.

Jusqu'ici ces Rédifs sont tranquilles et n'ont fait rien qui trouble la ville; mais la plupart des Chrétiens ont toujours peur.

Je suis de nouveau assuré que les deux compagnies détachées du bataillon de troupes régulières en station en ce lieu sont parties à Ein-el-Kroum, comme j'ai eu l'honneur de vous le soumettre par mon rapport du 5 de ce mois.

Agréez, &c.

(Signé) N. VITALES.

No. 202.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 313.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 15, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of papers which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch in regard to forced conversions to Islamism.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 202.

Papers communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

CONVERSIONS FORCÉES.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 20 Mars (v. s.), 1895, arrivé de Van.

LES conversions forcées à l'Islamisme continuent à Van et les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement obligent la femme et les enfants majeurs ou mineurs du renégat de cohabiter avec lui, déclarant exécuter ainsi les prescriptions de la loi religieuse Musulmane. A Van c'est le Gouverneur-Général, son Excellence Bahri Pacha en personne qui procède de cette manière, au vu et au su de tout le monde.

Tout dernièrement encore à Moks et à Chadukh dix Arméniens, hommes et femmes, ont été obligés sous pression de se convertir à l'Islamisme avec leurs enfants. A Bache-Kalé de même neuf familles Arméniennes ont dû changer, par force, de religion;

parmi les membres de ces familles il y avait plusieurs femmes enceintes qui ont dû subir toutes sortes de mauvais traitements, malgré leur état intéressant.

Parmi les conversions ayant eu lieu dans les dépendances du vilayet, le Vali ordonne *pro formâ* d'envoyer les personnes désireuses de changer de religion au chef-lieu du vilayet où, suivant l'usage adopté, elles doivent se présenter par-devant le Conseil Administratif, pour y faire en toute liberté leur déclaration. Cet ordre n'est jamais exécuté.

A Van même, le Gouverneur-Général a refusé de livrer à l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne deux demoiselles Arméniennes, âgées de 8 ans, dont l'une était gardée depuis plusieurs mois chez son valet de chambre et l'autre chez un Turc. Après plusieurs démarches du Métropolitain, ces deux demoiselles ont à peine été présentées au Conseil Administratif; on n'a pas permis au Métropolitain de procéder aux formalités d'usage, et le Vali a répondu par des paroles outrageantes aux sollicitations du Métropolitain, qui voulait faire rentrer ces deux enfants dans leurs familles.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 23 Mars (v. s.), 1895, arrivé de Malatia (Vilayet de Mamouret-ul-Aziz).

Le nommé Serkis Baghassakian, originaire de Husni-Mansour, se trouvant, il y a trois mois, dans le village de Tchiralik, du district de Kaglité, y a embrassé l'Islamisme par suite des instigations d'un notable nommé Mehmed Bey, fils de Zeynel Bey. Aucune des formalités d'usage n'a été observée lors de cette conversion. Mais le Caïmacam de Husni-Mansour, appelant quelques semaines plus tard le prêtre Der-Ovagnime de Husni-Mansour, lui a ordonné de signer une déclaration constatant que les formalités avaient eu lieu. Le prêtre a répondu que si les formalités avaient été réellement accomplies dans le village de Tchenalik (comme le soutenait le Caïmacam), une telle déclaration était superflue. Mais le Caïmacam insistant dans sa demande, avec des menaces, le prêtre a dû se conformer à l'ordre.

De plus, le Mufti de Husni-Mansour, ayant déclaré que le mariage était valide, même après la conversion de l'un des partis, on a voulu obliger la femme Élisabeth, épouse du renégat, à cohabiter avec lui. On a envoyé cette dame, qui habitait depuis la conversion de son mari dans la maison du prêtre Der-Ovagnime, chez le Caïmacam, où on l'invitait, chaque jour, sous des menaces, à embrasser l'Islamisme. Plus tard cette dame a été conduite chez Hafiz-Mehmed Effendi, Greffier du Mufti, qui a voulu également la forcer à changer de religion.

La dite dame quittant unitamment la maison du greffier a pu se réfugier de nouveau chez le prêtre Der-Ovagnime, mais on craint de nouvelles pressions de la part des autorités locales.

PROFANATIONS D'ÉGLISES EN ARMÉNIE.

A Arapgiir.

Un télégramme adressé par les autorités ecclésiastiques d'Arapgiir (Vilayet de Mamouret-ul-Aziz), en date de 18 Avril (v. s.), 1895, rapporte que la nuit précédente on a jeté de l'une des fenêtres dans la Cathédrale Arménienne de cette ville le cadavre d'un chien décapité, à la queue duquel on avait attaché une croix. Cette profanation a produit une profonde émotion parmi la population Arménienne de la localité; tout service religieux est suspendu dans cette église, d'ordre du Conseil Ecclésiastique de Constantinople. L'office de sanctification sera célébré prochainement.

A Armedan.

Extrait d'un Rapport récent sur les circonstances du procès d'Armedan.

Lors de l'enquête ouverte par les autorités Ottomanes sur l'affaire d'Armedan le Juge d'Instruction de Kourou-Tchay a fait comparaître devant lui le prêtre Der-Bogloss,

du village du Petit Armedan, auquel il a ordonné de déposer tout ce qu'il savait des faits et agissements du prétendu Comité révolutionnaire. Le prêtre ayant déclaré ne rien savoir, le Juge l'a fait emprisonner pendant quatre heures dans des latrines et ne l'a laissé en liberté qu'après avoir pris £ T. 10.

Plus tard le même Juge d'Instruction s'est rendu en compagnie du Cadi et du Chef de la Police, et avec une escorte de gendarmes aux villages du Grand et du Petit Armedan. Ils ont assiégé les églises des deux villages et en y pénétrant ils ont osé monter sur l'autel, prendre les croix qui s'y trouvaient, les jeter outrageusement par terre et crier "Est-ce ces fétiches qui vous sauveront de nos mains, misérables Guiavours! vos vies sont entre nos mains et rien ne peut vous sauver." Le prêtre Der-Agop en voyant ces profanations est tombé évanoui. Le Juge d'Instruction et ses compagnons ont voulu aussi saisir les archives des églises. Les habitants n'ont pu les reprendre qu'en donnant £ T. 60 à ces fonctionnaires, pour contenter leur cupidité.

Insultes à la Religion Chrétienne.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 12 Avril, 1895, arrivé de Diarbékir.

Séliane Agha, Commandant de Gendarmerie de Diarbekir, qui avait voulu obliger, il y a deux mois, le prêtre Der-Kaspar, desservant de l'Eglise de la Sainte-Vierge, de simuler la cérémonie de la messe, vient de se rendre coupable d'une nouvelle insulte à la religion Chrétienne.

Hier, Lundi, 11 Avril (v. s.), vers midi, le dit Commandant se trouvant dans le magasin du Syrien Agop-Tommayan, a appelé un Turc nommé Khado et lui a ordonné de simuler la cérémonie de la messe.

Un boutiquier, nommé Yeghouche, entendant ces paroles du Commandant, lui a observé qu'un tel ordre de la part d'un homme ayant une position officielle était inconvenant.

Le Commandant n'a attaché aucune importance à cette observation timidement présentée, et le Turc s'est mis à parodier la messe et les autres cérémonies de l'Eglise avec des mouvements désordonnés et des intonations outrageantes.

Le Commandant, non content de cette première insulte, l'a fait plus tard répéter dans une place publique, où se trouvaient, outre les Arméniens, des Turcs, et des Chrétiens d'autres confessions.

No. 203.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 311.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 15, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a paper which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch, entitled "Les Origines d'un Procès Politique," being an account of judicial proceedings before the Penal Court of Appeal at Erzeroum in connection with Armenians.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 203.

Paper communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

Les Origines d'un Procès politique.

LE fait suivant, récemment arrivé, donne une idée de la manière dont les affaires sont jugées par-devant la Cour d'Appel pénale siégeant à Erzeroum.

Vingt et un Arméniens des environs de Khenouss se trouvaient, depuis plus d'un

an, dans les prisons d'Erzeroum, sous l'accusation d'avoir caché des armes, d'être en rapport avec des révolutionnaires Arméniens, et de les abriter.

Cinq de ces Arméniens, ne pouvant plus endurer les tortures qu'on leur faisait subir dans les prisons, y ont succombé, après de cruelles souffrances.

Le procès des seize autres, retardé depuis, vient d'avoir lieu. L'Arrêt rendu par la Cour comporte l'acquittement de douze prisonniers et la condamnation aux peines suivantes des quatre restants: Manouk Minassian, originaire du village de Kakhlik; Vartan Papakhian, originaire du village de Khalil-Tchavouch; Megueriditch, instituteur à Khenouss, condamnés à cinq ans de détention; Ohannès, originaire du village de Chabine, condamné aux travaux forcés à perpétuité.

Les accusés, dont les noms suivent, sont morts en prison, pendant leur détention préventive: Khazar Papazian, originaire du village de Khalil-Tchavouch; Garo Movsessian, originaire du village d'Aross; Hatchadour Kévorkian, originaire du village de Khenouss; Eghia Mélikian, originaire du village de Kharo-Tchoban; Meno Mechetzian, originaire du village de Kharo-Tchoban.

Quant aux origines du procès, il est avéré que le Notable Manouk Minassian, dont le nom figure parmi les condamnés, ne pouvant plus endurer les vexations et l'oppression commises par les Turcs au préjudice de la population Arménienne de la localité, s'était assuré par l'autorisation de Fex-Caïmacam de Khenouss de la protection d'un Kurde, auquel il avait remis un fusil pour en faire usage en cas de besoin. Quelques compatriotes, ayant des rancunes contre lui, l'ont dénoncé à un policier Turc, Mehmed Effendi, domicilié depuis un an à Khenouss, en l'accusant de cacher dans sa maison des armes prohibées. Celui-ci a exigé de lui remettre le fusil offert au Kurde. Malgré l'autorisation explicite du Caïmacam et malgré le plaidoyer de son avocat, Manouk est, quand même, convaincu d'avoir caché des armes, et ce prétexte suffit pour le faire condamner à la peine susmentionnée.

Le Notable Arménien Khazar, frère de Manouk, qui est mort dans la prison, est également une victime de l'oppression des Kurdes.

Khazar possédait une fille très belle du nom de Nazo que les Kurdes ont essayé maintes fois d'enlever.

Pour la soustraire aux convoitises de ces derniers, Khazar amène sa fille dans le village de Tcherkez et la marie à un jeune Arménien nommé Garghine Megueriditchian. Les Kurdes, affligés de ce mariage, ne tardent pas à commettre de nouveaux méfaits contre la famille de la mariée; et un an après, lors d'une visite que celle-ci rendait à ses parents, ils assiègent la maison, forcent les portes et enlèvent de force la jeune femme, qui n'a pu être sauvée depuis.

Les plaintes de ses parents n'ont eu jusqu'à présent d'autre effet que de surexciter la colère des ravisseurs et de leurs acolytes, dont les méfaits sont devenus plus fréquents.

Fatigués de l'insouciance dont l'autorité locale a continuellement fait preuve et encourant de véritables dangers, les parents de la belle Nazo achètent un fusil pour pouvoir se défendre, le cas échéant. Mais les Kurdes, profitant de la présence de l'agent de police, Mehmed Effendi, les accusent de nouveau de cacher des armes.

Sur cette dénonciation, Khazar est imprisonné et la police lui réclame son fusil. C'est en vain que les deux frères exposent la vérité, pour prouver leur innocence; personne ne veut les croire.

Ajoutant alors naïvement foi aux paroles de Mehmed Effendi, ils se mettent à se procurer deux fusils au prix desquels celui-ci leur avait promis la liberté. C'est en échangeant contre deux magnifiques balles que les deux fusils sont achetés, l'un à Chukri Bey, fils de Mahmoud Agha, membre du Tribunal de la localité; et l'autre au serviteur du fameux brigand Kurde Djéno. Cette rançon ne les sauve pas davantage et le procès aboutit aux condamnations susmentionnées qui donnent une idée bien triste de la manière dont la justice est rendue dans ce malheureux pays.

No. 204.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 317.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 15, 1895.

WITH reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 145 of the 9th April, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo in regard to Agob Remzy Der Ghazarian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 204.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir,

Aleppo, May 3, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 22nd ultimo, calling for information respecting an Armenian lawyer, named Agob Remzy Ghazarian, of Aintab, now in prison at Janina, and I beg to inform your Excellency, in reply, that this man's history is of extraordinary interest, and it will be necessary to enter into details with the object of explaining why the Imperial Government thought it desirable to deport him to so remote a place as Janina.

His real name is Agob Babigian. His father, Konyoun-ji Babig, was a jeweller at Aintab, since dead, and of his brothers, one, Garabed Der Ghazarian, is in prison at Adana, as reported in my despatch of the 16th April.

In 1876 this man, then about 23 years of age, resided at Aleppo, where he learned and practised the profession of dentist. He then removed to Killis, where he fell under the influence of a Dervish and became a mystic and clairvoyant. He returned to Aleppo, where he assumed the two names "Remzy" and "Der Ghazar," names which are affected especially by poets or persons of a mystic, half-crazy character, like the subject of the present report. It is said that, at this time, his gift of clairvoyance was employed by the authorities of Aleppo for the detention of crime.

In 1880 Agob Remzy Der Ghazarian went to Stamboul, where he practised as a dentist in the street known as "Kalpakjilar," his private residence being a lodging in a house next door to the Armenian Patriarchate at Koum Kapou.

When, later on, he had established a reputation among the Turks as a Seer, this house became the resort of many of the best known personages in Constantinople, such as Djevder Pasha, the Procureur-Général of Stamboul, and others. My informant is one of the Consulate Dragomans who knows Agob Remzi Der Ghazarian intimately, and lived with him at the time in the house at Koum Kapou.

At this time Agob Remzi Der Ghazarian presented a Petition to His Majesty the Sultan, claiming the power of divination, and asking for leave to exhibit his powers before the Sovereign. He was summoned to the konak of Ghazi Osman Pasha, who appears to have been greatly impressed by what he saw, for he shortly afterwards presented him to the Sultan, who was desirous of ascertaining, with his aid, who had caused the death of Sultan Abdul Aziz.

For thirty days this man was the guest of the Sultan at Yildiz Kiosk, being lodged in rooms provided by the keeper of the Imperial stables (Istabil Amiri), and at the end of that period he was dismissed with a present of 300 medjidiés. During that period he assumed the appearance of a Mussulman, robed as a Dervish, carrying a "tespikh" (rosary) in his hand; but from the date of his visit to the Palace his reputation seems to have declined, while his language and behaviour became daily more extravagant. He professed to have visions about events in Egypt, and sent constant Petitions to the Palace upon the subject. As no attention was paid to them he began to send telegrams to the Sultan, until, one day, he was arrested and deported at Adana. He appears to have remained several years in that city as an exile at large, but he ultimately returned to Constantinople, probably with permission, for he then began to practise as a lawyer in the Courts at Stamboul. He appears, however, to have given fresh offence, for at the end of 1891, or perhaps a little later, he was exiled to Aintab, where he lived as a Dervish for about two years, continued to have visions, and to send telegrams to the Sultan. It is pretended among other stories that he foretold the earthquake at Constantinople a month before it took place.

This man is, no doubt, a lunatic, and ought to be under control. It does not appear that he had taken any special part in Armenian politics, but he is an extraordinary personality with a great gift of language, and when the Vali of Aleppo imprisoned him at Aintab last October it was found advisable to remove him to Aleppo, as he was always haranguing the prisoners at Aintab on his own peculiar tenets.

No doubt, for the same reason, he was found to be an undesirable prisoner at Aleppo.

He is described as about 42 years of age, short, dark, with heavy black moustache, and very peculiar round eyes.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM

No. 205.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 321.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 16, 1895.*

WITH reference to my telegram to your Lordship No. 161 of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum respecting the alleged tampering with witnesses at the Sassoon Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 205.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, April 30, 1895.*

YESTERDAY my French colleague received a telegram from his Delegate with the Commission of Inquiry at Moush, which was sent in the name of all the Delegates, reporting that the witness Hebo, of the village of Sheuik, whose statement made to me formed the inclosure to my despatch of the 8th ultimo, had given important evidence, throwing light on the pressure brought to bear by the Moush authorities, apparently with the connivance of the Commissioners, upon witnesses regarded as hostile to the Government.

He declared that on the previous day, the 28th April, in the Government House, he had been threatened with death by the Chief of the Gendarmerie if he accused the regular troops and not the Kurds, of massacring the Armenians; and that, subsequently, the Mutessarif of Moush, in presence of a Pasha and of a person whom he recognized as the Secretary of the Commission, had repeated the same recommendation to him, Nadir Agha and the Mufti serving as interpreters, for Hebo only speaks Armenian and Kurdish. He also stated that the Mutessarif promised he should be given 500 sheep, 10 oxen, and 1,000 piastres in money; that his house should be rebuilt, as well as the village of Sheuik, of which he was to be named Kehaya or Headman; and that £T. 360, taken from his brother Kriko, who was killed in the massacres of 1894, should be restored to him. In return, he was to acknowledge in his evidence before the Commission that he had seen the agitator Mourad (Dr. Hampartsoum Boyajian), whose revolutionary counsels had been followed by the Armenians, to attribute the burning of the villages to the Kurds; to declare that Mourad and his band had fought against the soldiers at Gheliéguzan and afterwards at Gheliésan; and, lastly, to refuse to answer any questions on the subject of the death of the priest of Semal, Der Ohannès, and of the women said to have been massacred in a church.

The Delegates add that the President of the Commission had promised them to hold an inquiry into this alleged tampering with an important witness, but to clearly express the opinion, in the light of their own private information and of the general conduct of the inquiry, that these grave accusations are well founded; and they ask for instructions as to the attitude they should assume under the circumstances.

As soon as the French Consul had communicated this telegram to my Russian colleague and myself, we met at his house and decided to transmit the contents by telegram to our respective Ambassadors in identical form, submitting the request of the Delegates for instructions to your Excellency's consideration without further comment.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 206.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 322.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 16, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, forwarding a despatch from Mr Shipley, and the *procès-verbaux* Nos. 31-39 of the Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 206.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May 4, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Mr. Shipley, British Delegate with the Commission of Inquiry at Moush. Joint Reports by the Consular Delegates, numbered 31 to 39 inclusive, of the proceedings at the sittings of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 11th March respectively, have been sent in single copy to the French Consul at Erzeroum, by whom they are being transmitted to the French Ambassador at Constantinople, after copies have been taken by my colleagues and myself for our archives.

Mr. Shipley furnishes an analysis of the contents of these Reports, to which he adds some observations upon the subsequent progress of the inquiry up to the time of writing, the 27th April. From these your Excellency will perceive that he states his opinion that, from the evidence now before the Commission, it is becoming evident that the magnitude of the Sassoon affair was not in the least exaggerated in the earlier reports received at Constantinople and elsewhere; that evidence is slowly accumulating as to the allegations of massacre by the soldiers at Ghelié-Guzan, no semblance of evidence being brought forward on the other side to show that they are merely Armenian inventions devised for the purpose of discrediting the Turkish Government; and that the Turkish Commissioners appear to be endeavouring to substantiate the theory of Armenian rebellion and atrocities, as set forth in the official statement which appeared in the "Levant Herald" and other Constantinople newspapers on the 23rd November, 1891, but that this theory was not borne out by the facts which have come before them.

With regard to the witnesses proposed by the Delegates to the Commission, as reported in Mr. Shipley's telegram to your Excellency of the 29th March, he has now, at my request, sent me more detailed information, from which it appears that, of over forty persons mentioned by name on the Delegates' list, besides a number of others as to whose identity sufficient indications were given, only seven had already been produced and heard by the 26th April, while three more were at Moush awaiting examination. Among the witnesses asked for was the officer who commanded the troops at Ghelié-Guzan. I am now able to report that Colonel Tewfik Bey, of the 25th Infantry Regiment, who is put forward by the Government as the officer asked for, left Erzeroum for Moush on Monday last, under orders from Constantinople.

In the conclusion and postscript of Mr. Shipley's despatch he deals with the destitute condition of the Sassoon villages, the allocation of a sum of £T. 2,500 for their relief, and the intention of the Government to settle them in their old villages. My own information tallies with that of Mr. Shipley as to their abject poverty, and it is clearly a hardship to leave them any longer as a burden on the Armenian villagers of other districts.

The sum of £T. 2,500, although it may go a little way towards averting absolute starvation, is ridiculously inadequate for carrying out the re-establishment of the Sassoonlis in their ruined houses and devastated farmsteads, especially if it

is to be administered by Government officials under the present régime. The latter are only too likely to follow the example of their late chief—Tahsin Pasha—who is well known to have embezzled £T. 1,500 out of a sum of £T. 7,000 sent from Constantinople for the relief of the famine-stricken people of Bitlis a year ago. But I venture to point out that a first condition of success in any attempt to restore these unfortunate people to their former homes must be the issue of stringent and speedy orders from Constantinople to prevent the entry of the nomad Kurds from Sairt and Diarbekir into the Sassoon district, for the present year at least, and until really effective measures have been taken for securing their future good behaviour.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 206.

Mr. Shipley to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Moush, April 27, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to report to you that Protocols Nos. 31 to 39 inclusive, drawn up by the Consular Delegates, of the proceedings at the sittings of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry of the 1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, and 11th March respectively have been forwarded in single copies to M. Bergeron, Consul in charge of the French Vice-Consulate at Erzeroum.

The depositions of Sino and Ego, of Semal (Protocols Nos. 31 and 32), complete the series of seven witnesses, beginning with Sako, of Shenik, referred to in my despatch of the 4th March last, and the value of their evidence as a basis for further inquiry into the events of Sassoun will be best estimated by a comparison with that furnished by the greater part of the witnesses of the series beginning with the Kurd Mcho-ben-Mizo (Protocol No. 33), and ending with Gope Veled Avedik, of Semal (Protocol No. 39), the whole of whom, with the exception of the woman Saro, of Ghelié-Guzan (Protocol No. 36), were produced before the Commission through the medium of the Moush local authorities.

Certain of these witnesses, viz., Egho Veled Keshish, Resho V. Giorgi, Gaspar V. Temo (Protocol No. 34), Patto V. Avedis, Tavo V. Atto, Omer-ben-Ahmet, Mullah Osman, and Boghos V. Khazar (Protocol No. 35), were apparently called by the Commission to furnish further proof of the brigandage and revolutionary doings of the Armenians of Talori and Kavvar generally, in the spring and summer of last year; and with regard to their evidence I would only point out that it is a singular circumstance that, while all of them brought general charges against the Armenians of those districts of being engaged in brigandage, they none of them appeared to be able to cite a single case in which the inhabitants of their own village had been the sufferers. Their evidence, in fact, was for the most part hearsay, and you will not fail to observe that they all preserve a discreet silence as to the events which may have taken place after the dispersion of the Armenians on the Antok by the soldiers.

Of the Armenians of the district of Kavvar itself heard at the sittings of the Commission between the dates above referred to, viz, Khazar V. Boghos (Protocol No. 33), Manouk V. Hebo (Protocol No. 34), Bedros V. Hatcho, Saro (Protocol No. 36), Mardiros V. Nigo, Manouk V. Nigo, Stepan V. Manouk (Protocol No. 37), Avé V. Kalo, Gébo V. Aghob, Priest Stepan (Protocol No. 38), Asdur V. Merké, Gopé V. Avedik (Protocol No. 39), all, with the exception of Saro, were summoned, as I have already stated, by the Commission itself in pursuance of the plan adopted, by which certain of the Kavvar Armenians resident in the villages of the Moush Plain should be produced by the Moukhtars of those villages, previous application having been made to the latter through the medium of the Moush authorities. With regard to certain of these witnesses, such as Stepo V. Erko, Ohan V. Boghos, Mardiros V. Nigo, and Manouk, it is difficult to say why they were summoned at all, as for the most part their depositions consisted of little else beyond the statement that, on hearing that the soldiers were coming, they took to the mountain, after which they appeared to have neither seen nor heard anything further. The only depositions, perhaps, that call for any notice are those of

Khazar V. Boghos, of Shenik (Protocol No. 33), and Stepan V. Manouk (Protocol No. 38), the first named giving interesting though in some respects contradictory details respecting the flight of the villagers to the Antok, while Stepan, it will be observed, gives a description of the remains of human bodies which he found in the ravine near Ghelié-Guzan. With reference to the evidence given by the woman Saro, who, I am bound to say, appeared to me sane enough, you will observe that we have stated officially (Protocol No. 38) that the medical report on her case could not be considered as entirely conclusive by us in the absence of independent medical testimony. With reference to the evidence of the priest Stepan, who appears to have acted as informer, I would draw attention to the fact that his statements as regards the burning of the houses were so contradictory as to deprive them of all value, viewed as a means of elucidating the truth.

With regard to the general result of the inquiry, it is difficult, even at the present advanced stage, to express an opinion, except under great reserve, as, although the Commission has already been sitting three months, the examination of the Talori prisoners who have been sent here from Bitlis has only just begun, and it is not until their evidence has been taken that it will be possible to form a clear idea of the events in Sassoon as a whole. From the depositions, nevertheless, of the three or four of them (there are, I understand, thirteen in all) which have already been given, as well as from the evidence of Armenians heard before the Commission during the past few weeks, it is becoming evident that the magnitude of the affair has not in the least been exaggerated in the reports which had been previously received at Constantinople and elsewhere. The exact number of villages destroyed (a Talori witness has put them down as fifty-five) will of course have to be verified by the Commission, but this much seems almost certain, that, in addition to Shenik, Semal, Ghelié-Guzan, Alian, Hetink, Aghpi, and Spagank, the whole district of Talori has been wiped out. Of the loss of life involved in this destruction of these villages I can as yet form no estimate. All that can be said is that scarcely a single Armenian witness has as yet appeared before the Commission without deposing to the loss of one or more members of his own family.

With reference to the alleged massacre by the soldiers at the camp of Ghelié-guzan, the evidence is steadily accumulating; three of the women alleged by Tavo and others to have been present having at length, as I had the honour to inform you by my telegram of the 16th April, been found and examined by the Commission.

The following is a brief outline of the story given by these three women:—

It appears that the inhabitants of Semal, after their flight from the Antok Mountain itself, whither they had been followed by the soldiers, gathered together near a wood on a mountain situated not far from Ghelié-Guzan, the exact locality of which the witnesses were, however, not able to determine. There the priest, Ohannes, appears to have advised them to give themselves up to the soldiers. The people accordingly set out with him, and on their arrival at the camp of Ghelié-Guzan shortly after midday, all three witnesses state that they, with the other women, were separated from the men, who were taken to another part of the camp. The same night, all three women deposed, a number of soldiers came in among them, and as one of the witnesses expressed herself, "No honour was then left to us." The second night of their arrival at the camp was the night, according to the witnesses, of the massacre of the men. They did not themselves see it, but two of them asserted that the sounds reached them, and all of them state that on the next day, or the day following, when they were free to go, they passed by the pit into which the dead bodies had been thrown, and which they stated were mingled with blood. One of the witnesses, Mairan, wife of Korké, brother of Tavo, further stated that, in a smaller pit, she recognized the body of Priest Ohannes, with the eyes torn out, adding that the priest was formerly a member of their own house, but had for some little time past separated from them. They then finally found their way back to the village of Semal.

To the above story of these women, which I have in no way exaggerated, giving it exactly as it was told by them to the Commission, I may add the account given a day or two later by the shepherd referred to in my above-mentioned telegram of the 16th April. This shepherd, whose name was Oysep, brother of Tavo, of Semal, stated that he accompanied his father, Hatcho, with the other inhabitants of Semal, on their way to the camp at Ghelié-Guzan, remaining, however, a little behind, being in charge of some sheep. When nearly at the camp the witness stated that, frightened by the sound of firing, he turned back and fled, abandoning his sheep. Six or seven days later, on hearing that the soldiers had left, the

witness visited the place where the camp had been at Ghelié-Guzan. There the witness stated that he saw, besides the pit full of dead bodies, the dimensions of which he gave as about 20 feet in length, by about 5 feet in depth, a number of bodies, mixed up pell-mell in a small ravine close by, among which, he asserted, were those of some women and children. Certain of the bodies had been stripped, and the witness gave the same account as the three women above referred to as regards their being mingled with blood. He added that among the bodies he recognized only that of his father, which he buried, and that of the Priest Ohannes, which was in a separate and smaller trench, the larger one not allowing of a close approach owing to the smell of the putrefying corpses. When questioned as to the number of people, men, women, and children, accompanying Priest Ohannes, the witness stated that he could not say with any exactitude, but that they were probably more than 300, and that among them there might possibly have been a few of the inhabitants of Ghelié-Guzan and Shenik.

I need only say, with regard to the statements of the four witnesses above mentioned, that I have endeavoured to reproduce them with the utmost exactitude as they were made before the Commissioners. They are, it will be seen, most serious, and I feel, therefore, considerable hesitation in expressing as yet an opinion of any kind upon them. Nevertheless, if they are merely exaggerations of the Armenians invented for the purpose of discrediting the Turkish Government, I can only regard it as a very serious matter indeed; that no semblance of evidence to show that this is the case has yet been produced by the Turkish Commissioners, though the accusations, as will be remembered, were made as far back as the 14th February last.

The line taken by the Commissioners throughout the inquiry, and which they have brought a great number of Kurds and others to support, appears to have been to show that the inhabitants of Shenik, Semil, and Ghelié-Guzan, and of the Talori district, incited by Mourad, who arrived among them in the spring of last year, began to form into bands on the Antok Mountain, from which they descended at intervals during the summer, committing acts of brigandage and atrocity on the Kurds, who were proceeding to their summer pasturages, which, in turn, led to resistance on the part of the latter, and armed conflicts. It was, the Commissioners appear desirous through their witnesses of showing, to put a stop to these conflicts that the troops were sent to Ghelié-Guzan and Talori. On the Armenians attacking the soldiers, conflicts took place both at Ghelié-Guzan and at Ghelié-an, which resulted in the final dispersion of the Armenians, and the loss of a few lives on the part of the latter.

As will be seen from the above, the Commissioners have adhered fairly closely to the official publication on the subject in the "Levant Herald" of the 23rd November last. Unfortunately for this version of the matter, it is not entirely borne out by the facts which have so far been brought before us. As regards the acts of brigandage and atrocity laid to the charge of the Armenians, I have on several occasions pointed out that the evidence concerning them is by no means always satisfactory, and I do not propose to refer to them here. Certainly no convincing proof has hitherto been adduced that brigandage as a system was being carried on by the inhabitants of that district, and even granting the fact that the rare cases of murder, accompanied by circumstances of mutilation as horrible as has been alleged, had been committed by Armenians, that of itself would not suffice to connect a whole district with complicity in them. That armed conflicts occurred between the Badikanli and Bekiranli Kurds and the inhabitants of Shenik, Semil, and Ghelié-Guzan is certain. It was, according to the views apparently taken by the Commission, at this juncture that the troops appeared on the scene to restore order. But if this view be the correct one, there is still the fact of the villages of a whole district having been destroyed to be accounted for, and as the Bekiranli and Badikanli Kurds summoned by the Commission to speak to the conflicts between themselves and the Armenians above referred to have unanimously asserted that not being able, owing to inferiority of numbers, to hold out against the latter, they forthwith returned home to their winter quarters, the attempt has been made, as you will have observed from certain of the Protocols already sent in, on evidence which I can only call ludicrous, to show that it was the Armenians themselves who set fire to their villages as a means of the better preparing themselves for the revolution to follow.

On the other hand, Mourad and other agitators seem undoubtedly to have profited by the discontent existing among the Armenians of that district, owing to general misgovernment and their unsatisfactory state of dependence on the Kurds,

to carry on an active political propaganda, which the Turkish Government would be justified in regarding as dangerous; and the constant denial of the Armenians who have been called before the Commission, either that they knew of such a person as Mourad, or that they had had any conflicts at all with the Kurds or soldiers, has done not a little to weaken their case. For, as I feel convinced, from the evidence which has been brought before the Commission, that resistance was offered to the troops by the Armenians at Ghelié-Guzan and elsewhere, the only effect of the above denial on their part has been to force them into making contradictions as to their movements while flying from their villages, or while on the Antok Mountain itself, which, of course, tends to throw doubt on those of their statements which may be perfectly true. I must also point out that it seems to be tolerably certain that the Armenians of Talori committed an act of aggression on the Kaimakam of Koulp at the village of Eshentzor (Akkhesser) in the summer of last year, for which a reasonable penalty might have been exacted by the Turkish Government; but apart entirely from the question of excesses, I can only say that the measures which the latter thought fit to adopt have been justified by no evidence which has as yet been brought before the Commission.

As regards the progress of the inquiry, it is at length possible, as I had the honour to point out in my telegram to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople of the 23rd instant, to state with some certainty that we are entering upon the final stage, as the Commission appears to consider that the case against the Armenians has been sufficiently established. In addition to the witnesses proposed by ourselves, of whom I have forwarded to you a list in my despatch No. 11 of yesterday's date, there are the thirteen prisoners from Bitlis, of whom, however, four have already been examined. It is to be hoped that the above, together with the few Kurds and officers of the detachments employed during the operations, whom the Commissioners propose to call, may be got through in at any rate the next six weeks, when, I understand, a visit to the Sassoon district will be proposed by the Commission.

In concluding my Report, I beg to refer to a subject which has, I believe, also been alluded to by my colleagues in their Reports to their respective Consuls. It is, namely, the great distress, amounting in a great number of cases to abject destitution, which exists among the fugitives from Sassoon, and of which we have had during the course of the inquiry only too many opportunities of convincing ourselves by personal observation. My Russian colleague informs me that the sum of £T. 1,500 has been forwarded to relieve the more necessitous cases in the vicinity of Moush itself; but I would point out that this sum, though it will do much to diminish present distress, can only be regarded as a temporary palliative—the more serious question being what is to become of these people during the next winter. The time for spring sowing, even if they had the necessary implements and seed, is rapidly passing away; and the inhabitants of the villages of the Moush, Bouhanik, and other districts, who have maintained these fugitives during the whole of the past winter, are not unreasonably expecting to be relieved of their burden, now that summer is approaching. It is difficult to suggest a remedy, but they would, I believe, be willing to settle in their old villages if the means of tilling their fields were furnished them. It is, at all events, urgently necessary that something should be done during the summer, if it is desired that these people should not remain homeless during the ensuing winter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. S. SHIPLEY.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I, together with my colleagues, have been informed privately by the President of the Commission, Shelik Bey, that the sum of £T. 2,500, and not £T. 1,500, has been allocated to the needs of the Sassoonlis, and an attempt is to be made to settle them in their old villages. A Commission, of which two members are to be Armenians, will, the President further stated, be formed to give effect to the above decision; and an effort will be made to recover some of the cattle lost by the Armenians of Sassoon during the recent events. The project is, of course, to be commended in every way; and if the above sum is well applied, it will do something towards effecting the object in view, though I think it will not suffice; and there is very little prospect, I fear, of the cattle or sheep ever being restored to their rightful owners.

H. S. S.

Inclosure 3 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 31 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March 1, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Dans cette séance, le nommé Simo, fils de Boghos, de Semal, âgé de 27 ans, marié, paysan fermier, complète et achève sa déposition.

Il déclare, au début, qu'étant Arménien, il demande, pour dire la vérité, à avoir un Arménien, homme sûr auprès de lui, soit un membre du Conseil de l'Évêché Grégorien, soit un professeur des Protestants, il répondra, par l'intermédiaire du Migihirditch Effendi, présent à la séance en qualité de Drogman, si un membre de l'Évêché lui dit qu'il peut avoir confiance dans le dit Migihirditch.

Il se dit ensuite prêt à répondre aux questions qui lui seront posées si on lui en donne la liberté. Le Président l'y ayant autorisé, en lui recommandant de dire la vérité, il dépose comme suit.

Le 1er Avril (v. s.) de l'année dernière, les habitants de Semal étant au village, les Kurdes Bekranli y passèrent, se rendant à Merguemouzan, où les troupes étaient campées, comme les années précédentes.

Dans la même journée, Kurdes et soldats attaquèrent Chenik, d'où venait pendant deux heures environ le bruit de nombreux coups de fusil. Les habitants s'enfuirent dans la montagne. Ensuite les soldats étant venus à Semal, les gens de ce second village se sauvèrent également, qui des champs, qui des maisons; certains d'entre eux restèrent dans le village même. Ceux qui s'enfuirent allèrent à la montagne de Tchaï, où se trouvaient les pâturages d'été de Semal.

Pendant cette attaque, les deux fils du nommé Stepan, les nommés Cherho et Ohan, furent tués, ainsi que deux vieilles femmes, restées dans les maisons; l'une se nommait Toré, femme d'Ohannès. Le témoin ne peut préciser le nom de l'autre et ne peut dire non plus exactement de qui il tient ce fait, que beaucoup de personnes lui ont raconté; c'était la femme [illegible].

Ayant passé la nuit sur la Montagne de Tchaï, les gens de Semal virent le lendemain matin la fumée qui montait des villages; mais, poursuivis de nouveau par les soldats à Tchaï-Dagh, ils s'enfuirent à l'Antok-Dagh, d'où ils voulaient continuer à se sauver. Cependant, ils y demeurèrent en se disant: "Comment pourrions-nous échapper à la main de l'autorité?" et c'est dans cette pensée qu'ils restèrent dans l'Antok-Dagh, où ils se cachèrent derrière les rochers.

Ils avaient emmené avec eux leurs familles et leurs troupeaux; quant à leurs effets, ils en avaient, comme les autres années, caché les meilleurs dans des fosses, le reste étant laissé dans leurs maisons.

C'est seulement sur l'Antok-Dagh que les habitants de Semal se réunirent aux gens de Chenik. Là se trouvaient déjà les habitants d'Alian, qui y avaient leurs pâturages. Le témoin n'y a pas vu de gens de Guéliéguzan et ni vu ni entendu dire qu'il y ait eu personne de Talori ou d'Aghpi.

Il n'avait auprès de lui que sa sœur, et ne peut dire combien de temps les habitants de Semal sont restés sur l'Antok-Dagh.

Ayant aperçu de loin l'approche des soldats et se trouvant trop dispersés dans la montagne pour se concentrer dans le but de se rendre, les Arméniens réunis, pendant que les soldats les tenaient, s'enfuirent alors dans des directions différentes. Une partie des troupes vint sur l'Antok-Dagh, l'autre alla à Guéliéguzan.

De l'Antok-Dagh, qui domine les environs, les villageois pouvaient voir le mouvement des troupes qui, à la date du 2 ou 3 Août, vinrent de Kemper-Chérif, Han, et Ilavid. Une partie d'entre eux resta sur place—le témoin ignore ce qu'ils sont devenus—et l'autre partie se dispersa, qui vers Sassoun, qui à Guélié-Hengüvi, du côté de Khian. Le témoin ne sait rien pour les gens de Chenik. Il n'a pas vu de ses propres yeux que les soldats ou les Kurdes aient tué des Arméniens sur l'Antok-Dagh. Ceux des habitants de Semal qui résolurent à s'échapper se dirigèrent vers Sassoun dans l'idée d'y trouver protection auprès de leurs Aghas; mais leur espoir fut trompé.

Au nombre de 400 ou 500, y compris femmes et enfants, et ayant leurs troupeaux avec eux, ils s'arrêtèrent dans les champs de Khoroum Kop, non loin de Hetink, à trois heures de Guéliéguzan, et y restèrent pendant cinq jours. Hetank était le village le plus rapproché, avec Aghpi, qui était brûlé, le témoin ne sait pas par qui.

Pendant que les villageois étaient à Khoroum Kop, leur Agha de Sassoun, nommé Selim Ben Posto, dont les terres étaient voisines et qui y faisait la moisson, vint leur dire ne pouvoir les emmener par crainte. Les habitants de Hetink, dont le village n'était pas brûlé, n'avaient pas voulu davantage les recueillir, ayant peur des Kurdes, avec lesquels ils ont des cultures communes.

L'oncle du témoin, le prêtre Ohannès, leur conseilla alors de se rendre à un endroit nommé Alatchak, où ils passeraient la nuit, et d'aller ensuite à Kharzikoum, près de Guéliéguzan et où ils trouveraient dans les champs plus facilement à se nourrir.

Le témoin lui-même, en compagnie de son frère Girbé, gagna directement Kharzikoum, où ils passèrent quatre à cinq jours en recueillant des graines de guelguel. De là tous deux allèrent à Kiagaslim, district de Shatak, et restèrent dans les montagnes voisines. Comme les soldats allaient et venaient dans le village et comme à sa connaissance ils avaient tué beaucoup de monde, le témoin et son frère, craignant le même sort, n'entrèrent pas dans Kiagaslim. Si les habitants n'en furent pas tués, le témoin en ignore la cause.

Tous deux gagnèrent ensuite le village de Petah, où ils passèrent un mois et d'où, après y être resté seul et malade, le témoin revint à son village de Semal. Il en trouva les maisons brûlées, les champs dévastés, l'église ruinée et incendiée.

Pendant que le témoin et son frère se trouvaient à Kharzikoum, ils virent, venant vers eux, de la direction de Guéliéguzan, plusieurs femmes de Semal, qui leur firent le récit suivant. Le jour où eux-mêmes s'étaient séparés des autres villageois, le prêtre Ohannès, avec 500 personnes, se rendit à Alatchak. Deux hommes nommés Serko et Mardo, de Semal, vinrent à eux en leur disant: "Les soldats nous ont relâchés, en nous ordonnant de venir vous trouver, ainsi que le prêtre, et de vous dire d'aller vous rendre à eux; sinon, l'affaire tournerait mal pour vous. "Sur quoi," continuèrent les femmes, "le prêtre Ohannès nous ayant réunis au nombre de 400 à 500, nous conduisit à Guéliéguzan; là les femmes et les enfants furent mis d'un côté, les hommes emmenés d'un autre, mais nous n'avons pas vu et nous ne savons pas où. Des femmes y furent déshonorées par les soldats.

"Le lendemain matin," ajoutèrent les femmes, "nous vîmes que les troupes allaient vers Talori."

Elles disaient aussi avoir vu cinq cadavres sous des racines d'arbres, et un peu plus loin une fosse, remplie également de cadavres.

Elles étaient alors parties et vinrent du côté du témoin, sans savoir qu'il se trouvait là.

Ces femmes se nomment: Kharé, femme de Merké, fils de Sefer; Chouché, femme d'Artin Chabcho; Hazzé, femme de Tenio, fils de Nigos; Khaté, femme de Kalo; Chahbaz, femme de Mardiros, fils d'Ohan; Roumé, femme de Serkis, fils d'Arountin; Varté, femme de Khazar; Khaté, femme de Nigos, fils de Récho.

Parmi les maris de ces femmes ont été tués:—

Merké, fils de Sefer; Serkis, fils d'Arountin; Artin Chabcho; Echo, oncle du témoin; Khazar.

Kalo est mort depuis longtemps.

Mardiros, cousin du témoin Ténio, et Nigos, fils de Recho, sont vivants.

Les femmes ci-dessus énumérées n'ont pas dit au témoin avoir été elles-mêmes outragées par les soldats; mais en les voyant arriver au milieu d'elles, toutes ces mêmes femmes ont supposé qu'ils avaient de mauvaises intentions et elles se sont sauvées; elles ne savent donc pas ce qui s'est passé et n'ont rien vu.

Il résulte des autres déclarations du témoin que:—

1. Si les gens de Semal se sont enfuis sur l'Antok-Dagh et non pas à Stalak, c'est que leurs pâturages d'été étaient à Tchaï, dans la direction de la montagne. Ils ont également des pâturages à Kourtik-Dagh, mais en étaient revenus cette année une semaine avant le mois d'Août.

2. Le témoin ne connaît, en fait de rixes entre Kurdes et Arméniens, qu'un combat survenu entre les gens de Chenik et les Velikanli; quant aux Bekranli, ils étaient réunis aux soldats, qui étaient au village.

3. Le témoin n'a ni vu ni entendu dire que les Arméniens se soient battus avec les soldats; seulement pendant un ou deux jours, du matin au soir et par intervalles, la direction de Guéliéan et de Guéliéguzan, des bruits de coups de fusil venaient jusqu'à lui.

4. A sa connaissance, il n'y avait personne de Semal qui allait à Talori ou qui en vint. Il ne sait rien de Moücul dont il n'a pas entendu parler.

5. D'après le témoin, les nommés Serko et Mardo, de Semal, envoyés de

Guéliéguzan aux Arméniens pour les inviter à se rendre, furent tués ensuite avec le prêtre Ohannès, dont la femme était morte précédemment.

6. Les déclarations relatives au "hafir" versé aux Aghas Kurdes, confirment les dépositions précédentes. Les gens de Chenik, d'après lui, sont soumis au même tribut.

Le témoin raconte en terminant, de façon assez embarrassée, que son frère Melko, qui était avec lui sur l'Antok-Dagh, s'enfuit avec les troupeaux, et à la suite d'une rencontre avec les Kurdes, où des coups de fusil furent échangés, une partie des moutons fut prise par eux et l'autre amenée par Melko à Khoroum Kop.

Le deuxième témoin, Egho, de Semal, n'ayant pas achevé sa déposition, elle sera donnée en son entier dans la séance où elle prendra fin.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 4 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 32 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March 2, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin entendu dans cette séance, complète et achève sa déposition; il se nomme Egho, de Semal, fils de Aro. Il est âgé de 30 ans, marié, paysan fermier, parent éloigné du nommé Tavo (entendu dans la séance du 15 Février, 1895, Procès-verbal No. 19).

Il dépose comme suit:—

Dans les derniers jours de Juillet (v. s.) 1891, le témoin se trouvant dans les champs vit une troupe de Kurdes Bekrauli au nombre de quatre-vingts environ, tant cavaliers que piétons, et venant de Kop-Dagh, qui passaient par Semal, pour aller à Merguemouzan. Dans l'après-midi de ce même jour les Kurdes et les soldats réunis entourèrent Chenik, dont le témoin n'entendit pas venir le bruit de coups de fusil; ils en incendièrent les maisons et les habitants s'enfuirent vers la Montagne de Tchaï. Vers le soir les Kurdes et les soldats étant venus à Semal, qu'ils brûlèrent également, les gens de ce village prirent aussi la fuite vers cette même Montagne de Tchaï, où ils passèrent la nuit et où ils ne se mélangèrent pas avec les gens de Chenik; puis avec ces derniers, fuyant de nouveau devant les soldats, et sans passer par Guéliéguzan, ils gagnèrent tous l'Antok-Dagh; c'était le 1er ou le 2 Août.

A Tchaï, furent tués les nommés Cherko et Ohan, tous deux fils de Stepan et Toné, fils de Hetcho, malades et qui n'avaient pu se sauver. Le témoin ne l'a pas vu lui-même "Car," ajoute-t-il, "si j'étais resté là, j'aurais été tué aussi." Mais il le sait et l'a entendu dire; et leurs ossements à tous trois furent retrouvés l'automne suivant. Il ignore s'il y a eu là d'autres victimes.

A Semal, lors de l'incendie, était restée, comme pourrait en témoigner le nommé Aro, mais il a été tué, la femme du grand'oncle du témoin, vieille et aveugle, nommée Khaté. Elle y périt probablement. Il ne sait s'il y eut d'autres victimes au moment où les gens de Semal se sauvèrent.

Le témoin ignore les causes de l'attaque des deux villages; il ne les a pas demandées aux villageois, qui ne les connaissent pas plus que lui et ne pouvait s'en informer auprès des troupes. Les gens de Semal paient régulièrement leurs impôts au Gouvernement, et lui-même avait apporté au campement de Merguemouzan des vivres, et 900 piastres en acompte sur ces mêmes impôts.

Les années précédentes, les Bekraulis ne passaient pas par Semal; trois ou quatre Aghas seulement venaient s'y faire payer le "hafir." Jusqu'en 1894, il n'y avait pas eu de rixe entre les habitants et les Kurdes Badikauli et Bekrauli.

Cette année en voyant ces derniers, le témoin avait pensé qu'ils allaient rendre visite au Commandant de Merguemouzan. Trois ou quatre ans auparavant, des troupes y étaient venues, et réunies aux Kurdes Djebranli, avaient fait retourner en arrière les Badikauli. Le témoin n'a pas connaissance que des troupes soient venues postérieurement.

Sur l'Antok-Dagh, les gens de Semal en avaient emmené avec eux leurs familles et leurs troupeaux; mais n'avaient pas eu le temps d'y emporter leurs effets, laissés

dans les maisons et dont quelques-uns, tels que les ustensiles de cuivre, étaient cachés dans des fosses.

Là, le témoin n'a vu, outre les gens de son village et de ceux de Chenik, que ceux d'Alain qui avaient également leurs familles et leurs troupeaux. Il ne sait pas combien de temps ils sont tous restés sur l'Antok-Dagh, est-ce trois ou cinq jours? Ils n'avaient pas la tête à eux et ne distinguaient pas le jour de la nuit.

Pendant qu'ils y séjournèrent il n'y eût pas de combat entre eux et les soldats. Le témoin n'a ni pris part, ni entendu dire qu'il s'en soit produit à un combat dans les environs de Gueliéguzan et dans les ravins, du côté de Talori.

De l'Antok-Dagh, les Arméniens se sauvant y laissèrent leurs troupeaux. Le témoin avec sa femme, les nommés Erko, fils de Girbo; Arakel, fils de Khizro; et Bedo, fils de Kalo, avec leurs familles atteignirent après cinq ou six heures de route par des chemins détournés, le village de Mordegonk, du côté de Khian, et où ils espéraient trouver refuge auprès d'un villageois de Semal nommé Bedo, qui habitait Mordegonk depuis vingt ans et dont les Aghas Farko et Hazzo étaient là. Mais le témoin et ses compagnons n'y restèrent qu'un jour; car malgré leurs instantes prières, Ferko, Hazzo, et Ali ben Bro ne voulurent pas consentir à les garder, dans la crainte, disaient-ils, que les Arméniens étant "firmanli" (rebelles) eux-mêmes, les ayant recueillis, ne fussent ensuite traités de la même façon.

Le lendemain, les fuyards gagnèrent le ravin de Guéliéheuguévi, à trois heures de distance de Mordegonk et y restèrent trois jours environ; le témoin ne peut dire exactement, car ils n'avaient pas la tête à eux et étaient affamés.

Un grand nombre de soldats étant venus les y attaquèrent et tuèrent plusieurs de ces mêmes villegeois qui avaient fui ensemble.

Boghos, frère d'Erko; Bedros, fils d'Erko; Oskian, fils de ce même Bedros; Toné, parent d'Erko, et le fils de ce même Toné, âgé de 2 ans; Merké, oncle du témoin; Vartan, fils de ce même Sako; Gulé, et leur fille, Maké.

Il ne peut dire si s'est avec la baïonnette ou à coups de fusil qu'ils ont été tués; car lui-même s'était sauvé, mais ils ont péri sous les coups des soldats qui les poursuivaient.

Une fois rentrée à Semal, étant retourné à l'automne dans le même ravin avec un nommé Kevo, pour chercher le cadavre de son frère, il y voit la dépouille de ceux des gens ci-dessus énumérés et qui y avaient été tués.

Pendant qu'il était à Guéliéheuguévi, le témoin y entendait de nombreux coups de fusil; ainsi que les jours suivants, au cours de sa fuite.

En se sauvant de ce ravin, le témoin, qui était seul, se cacha dans les fourrés. Il y fut rejoint par un nommé Garabet qui, à ce qu'il apprit plus tard du nommé Ovak (séance du 18 Février, Procès-verbal No. 21), fut tué au camp de Guéliéguzan, et par un nommé Kévo. Le témoin ignore où il se trouve.

Tous trois se cachèrent dans une caverne où ils passèrent un jour. Pendant la nuit, ils gagnèrent les bois près d'Alatchak, qui se trouve du côté de Sassoun, et rencontrèrent le matin une partie des villageois de Semal, au nombre de 300 à 400 environ, avec leur prêtre Ohannès. Le témoin n'a pas fait attention s'il y avait parmi eux des gens d'autres villages, d'autant plus que c'était au milieu de la forêt. Ce même jour, les nommés Serko et Mardo, de Semal, vinrent du campement de Guéliéguzan en disant que le Mir-alay (Colonel) invitait les gens de Semal et le prêtre à se rendre à lui; sinon, qu'il enverrait les soldats pour les exterminer tous.

Le prêtre Ohannès engagea ses villageois à obéir à cet ordre; mais ce jour-là et la nuit suivante ils ne quittèrent pas Alatchak.

Le témoin, avec le nommé Gaspard, s'étant rendu dans un champ de blé voisin pour y ramasser des épis, y passa la nuit. Tous deux en se réveillant le lendemain à midi, virent que les gens de Semal avaient disparu.

Les deux fugitifs gagnèrent le ravin d'Aggi, où ils restèrent un jour; puis, marchant la nuit, ils arrivèrent dans les bois du ravin de Chahaban, où ils passèrent deux jours, se nourrissant d'épis de blé, trouvés dans les champs voisins. Ils se rendirent ensuite dans les bois de Chouchamerg, où ils restèrent de quatre à cinq jours et dont un berger lui raconta que les femmes de Semal étaient venues et glanaient des épis.

Le témoin n'entra pas dans Chouchamerg, qu'il a vu n'être pas brûlé, par crainte du Caïmacam de Sassoun et des troupes, qui se trouvaient dans le village voisin de Tapik.

Des bois de Chouchamerg il se rendit dans le ravin de Tzitzernak (Hulbulderessi) où, resté huit jours, il rencontra le nommé Nigos, de son village, qui lui raconta

qu'une partie des villageois étaient rentrés à Semal, où ils se nourrissaient de ce qu'ils trouvaient dans les champs.

En compagnie de Nigos, le témoin regagna Semal, où il retrouva sa femme, arrivée trois ou quatre jours avant lui et de laquelle, n'ayant eu que le temps de penser à sauver sa propre vie, il s'était séparé dans le ravin de Guéliéhenguévi, au moment de l'attaque des soldats. Le témoin ne lui a pas demandé, et elle ne lui a pas raconté, ce qu'elle était devenue pendant leur séparation.

A une question du Président sur l'époque précise de son retour au village, le témoin répond qu'il avait les pieds malades; qu'il était resté affamé; comment aurait-il pu prêter attention à un pareil détail?

Le témoin a entendu de la bouche des femmes de Semal nommées: Khaté, femme de Nigos; Kendo, femme d'Artin; Chahbaz, femme de Hebo; Khezzam, femme de Asatom, ces deux derniers ayant été tués, et les deux premiers étant vivants, car ils ne sont pas allés au camp de Guéliéguzan, le même récit que celui fait au nommé Simo, entendu dans la séance du 1er Mars (Procès-verbal No. 31) en ce qui concerne la venue des gens de Semal conduites par le prêtre Ohannès à Guéliéguzan pour se rendre aux troupes et la séparation opérée par elles des hommes d'avec les femmes et les enfants.

Elles ajoutèrent, continue le témoin, que le soir venu, elles-mêmes furent outragées par les soldats. Le lendemain, elles se sauvèrent vers Kharzikoum.

Ce récit a eu lieu près de Semal, dans les champs de Dechtak, où il avait rencontré les femmes en question, et en présence du nommé Gaspard, fils de Kélo, compagnon de fuite du témoin. Ce n'est pas sur sa question directe, mais sur sa demande au sujet de ce qu'elles étaient devenues, que ces femmes, réunies, lui firent ce récit.

Elles lui dirent, en outre, que les nommés Mardo et Serbo, de Semal, avaient été tués à Guéliéguzan.

Il résulte des autres déclarations du témoin que:—

1. Dans sa propre famille de ses cinq frères n'en restent à présent que deux: Arakel se trouvant à Derkevank; et un autre frère Artin, demeurant avec le témoin, et plus jeune que lui. Quant aux trois autres: Giro a été tué à Guéliéhenguévi; Melko; El Khazar ont disparu.

Il n'a pas retrouvé leurs cadavres, et ignore s'ils sont vivants ou morts.

Le témoin ne peut préciser le nombre des villageois de Semal qui ont été tués. Il n'en a pas dressé la liste, mais à son retour il a trouvé le village vide, des femmes sans maris, et des enfants sans pères. Dans des maisons qui comptaient sept ou huit personnes il n'y en a plus que deux ou trois; les autres villageois sont dispersés. Comment pourrait-il en faire le compte ou demander aux enfants ce que sont devenus leurs pères?

2. Le témoin nie avoir aucune connaissance de Mourad et des relations des villageois de Kavar avec ceux de Palori.

3. Les Arméniens n'avaient pas d'armes. Seuls d'entre eux en portaient les bergers, comme il résulte des dépositions précédentes. Avant la fuite à l'Antok-Dagh, ces bergers se trouvaient avec leurs troupeaux sur la montagne.

4. Les gens de Semal ont, ainsi que ceux de Chenik, leurs pâturages d'été sur la Montagne de Mouch; mais à l'automne les premiers vont à Tchal-Dagh, tandis que les seconds vont à Chieckivar, il ne sait pas où sont les pâturages de Guéliéguzan.

5. Ses déclarations concordent avec celles entendues précédemment au sujet du "liafir" versé aux Aghas Kurdes.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PREVALSKY.

Inclosure 5 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 33 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March 4, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin qui a commencé sa déposition la veille, et qui la termine dans cette séance, est le Kurde Mehemet ben Mirzo, de Khian, âgé de 30 ans, résident depuis douze ans à Mouch, où il est domestique chez le nommé Ibrahim Agha.

Ce témoin ayant eu des relations de commerce avec quelques villageois de Guéliéguzan, entre autres les nommés Mardo et Bogos, a été appelé par la Commission pour donner quelques renseignements sur le Kurde Rechid, entendu dans la séance du 20 Février (Procès-verbal No. 23).

Le témoin dépose qu'à Guéliéguzan il y avait jusqu'aux événements de l'année dernière trois maisons Kurdes: celle de son parent Ali, celle du nommé Melko, et celle de Rechid, tous trois ayant habité dans ce village.

Le témoin s'y est rendu à la fin de Juillet ou au commencement d'Août de l'année dernière, et a passé la nuit chez son parent Ali, mais il n'a pas rencontré Rechid à cette occasion.

Pendant son séjour il a vu que les Arméniens étaient armés, que quelques-uns d'entre eux s'en allaient à l'Antok-Dagh, après avoir brûlé eux-mêmes leurs maisons, ce que le témoin ajoute avoir vu de ses propres yeux.

Ali, interrogé sur les motifs de cette conduite, lui aurait répondu que les Arméniens s'en allaient à l'Antok-Dagh dans le but de se battre ensuite avec les Kurdes, et il lui aurait conseillé de s'en aller car sans cela il courait le risque d'être tué par les Arméniens.

Le témoin, en regagnant Mouch, ne passa pas par Chenik et Semal, mais il aperçut de la fumée qui en montait. Il n'a pas vu de rassemblement de gens sur l'Antok-Dagh. Il n'a pas vu davantage de lutte entre Arméniens et Kurdes. Ali lui aurait raconté qu'en 1893 s'était produit une rixe entre trois ou quatre habitants de Guéliéguzan et un nombre égal de Kurdes Karikanli, au cours de laquelle il y avait eu des tués des deux côtés.

Le témoin dit que les nommés Mardo et Bogos, avec qui il était en relation d'affaires, sont partis vers Khian, mais il donne le nom de quelques personnes, tant Musulmans que Chrétiennes, pouvant à Mouch témoigner de la vérité de ses affirmations sur ce point.

Le second témoin entendu est le nommé Khazar, fils de Boghos, de Chenik, se trouvant actuellement hospitalisé à Arindi Vank. Il est le premier d'une série de témoins qui comparaissent sur l'ordre de la Commission par l'intermédiaire des autorités locales et des Moukhtars. Le Président ayant fait savoir aux Délégués Consulaires dans la séance du 23 Février (Procès-verbal No. 26) qu'un grand nombre d'Arméniens de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan étant actuellement hospitalisés dans quatre-vingts villages environ de la plaine de Mouch, il convenait, en face de l'impossibilité évidente de se transporter dans chacun de ces villages pour y recueillir les témoignages de tous les gens qui s'y trouvaient, d'en faire comparaître quelques-uns, deux ou trois choisis parmi les réfugiés de chaque village de Kavar, les Délégués n'avaient pas manqué de marquer leur étonnement de ce fait, qui, si l'objet de la Commission était connu des Arméniens comme le Président en avait donné à plusieurs reprises l'assurance, ils ne vinssent pas d'eux-mêmes déposer devant la Commission, et que sept à peine d'entre eux eussent comparu jusqu'ici de leur plein gré.

Les Délégués avaient en outre fait remarquer l'intérêt qu'il y aurait pour assurer l'indépendance des témoignages à éviter toute intervention des agents de l'autorité locale et avaient dans ce but suggérée à la Commission de se rendre elle-même, sans les désigner d'avance, dans le nombre qu'elle jugerait nécessaire de ces quatre-vingts villages pour y recueillir en toute liberté une certaine quantité de dépositions émanées spontanément.

Le Président avait repoussé cette proposition en alléguant les difficultés matérielles et la Commission avait décidé de s'en tenir à sa première résolution.

Dans la séance du jour le nommé Khagar, interrogé sur son mode de comparution, explique qu'il a été convoqué et amené par un zaptié. Il ajoute ensuite qu'au moment où le zaptié lui a dit de venir à Mouch, se trouvait également présent l'adjoint du Moukhtar d'Arinidj-Vank.

Il résulte de son interrogatoire qui manque, du reste, de suite, que le témoin avec sa mère s'était enfui à l'Antok-Dagh, mais qu'il ne faisait pas partie des Arméniens armés.

Invité à différentes reprises à fournir des explications sur la cause de la fuite des villageois de Chenik et l'Antok-Dagh il dit successivement qu'elle est la conséquence de la venue sur leur village "d'hommes du Gouvernement" vêtus d'habits noirs

coiffés de fez, armés de fusils de guerre et qui, en leur disant "Vous êtes des rebelles' vous ne payez pas vos impôts," commençaient à les molester.

Le témoin dit ensuite que Chenik n'a été attaqué ni par les soldats ni par les Kurdes; mais que huit zaptiés seulement étaient venus pour le ravitaillement des troupes. Ce n'est pas devant eux que les villageois se sont enfuis mais par peur des troupes de Merguemouzan.

Pendant qu'ils se sauvaient de Chenik à l'Antok-Dagh il n'y eut pas de mort parmi eux ni au village, ni sur la route.

Personne ne les avait excités à fuir ni à s'enrôler comme soldats. Lui qui n'est qu'un simple berger ne connaît rien de ces faits.

Les gens de Chenik prirent la fuite avec leurs familles, leurs bergers, et les troupeaux. Ils avaient enfouis leurs effets dans des fosses et ceux qu'ils emportèrent avec eux furent ensuite abandonnés sur l'Antok-Dagh.

En fait d'armes, les Arméniens avaient des fusils à pierre dont le témoin ne sait pas le nombre.

La première nuit, les gens de Chenik avec ceux de Semal la passèrent sur une montagne en face de Guéliéguzan. Ils y furent rejoint le lendemain par des villageois que le témoin dit être de Guéliéguzan, qu'il explique ensuite être d'Alian; et tous ensemble partirent à l'Antok-Dagh. Les gens de Guéliéguzan y avaient envoyé seulement leurs familles et leurs troupeaux. Eux-mêmes n'avaient pas abandonné leurs maisons.

La fuite des habitants de Chenik hors du village commença le matin. A midi le village était vide. Ce même jour, Semal et Chenik furent incendiés—Semal le premier—et dans deux jours les deux villages étaient brûlés. Quant à leurs bergeries, situées hors du village, elles brûlaient une par une, pendant plusieurs jours.

Sur l'Antok-Dagh les Arméniens restèrent cinq jours, pendant lesquels le témoin n'a ni vu le nommé Mourad ni personne venant de Talori. Parmi eux se trouvait le Kiakia de Chenik, nommé Kirko, et à ce que le témoin apprit, le prêtre Ohannès, de Semal, qui ne fut pas tué au cours des combats, mais qui, à ce que les gens de Semal lui dirent, eut la tête coupée à Guéliéguzan.

Il répond d'une façon assez confuse aux questions qui lui sont posées sur les combats entre les soldats et les Arméniens pendant que le témoin lui-même avec les villageois ci-dessus désignés était sur l'Antok-Dagh.

Pendant les quatre ou cinq jours qu'ils y demeurèrent des combats se produisirent sur l'Antok-Dagh entre les soldats et les Arméniens—le témoin affirme que les adversaires des Arméniens étaient bien des soldats et non des Kurdes, car dans ce dernier cas les Arméniens "auraient sauté à la gorge des Kurdes et jamais ceux-ci ne leur auraient fait éprouver de tels dommages."

On peut inférer, des déclarations subséquentes du témoin, qu'à la suite d'un combat qui eut lieu à Guéliéguzan dans les champs pris des maisons pendant une journée toute entière et auquel il a assisté du haut de la montagne, les soldats et les Arméniens tirant les uns sur les autres, ces derniers s'enfuirent la nuit du côté de Kharzan; que cette même nuit, Guéliéguzan fut brûlé—le témoin ne sait pas qui a allumé l'incendie, les Arméniens ou les soldats—et que le lendemain matin les Arméniens restés sur l'Antok-Dagh prirent également la fuite dans des directions différentes. Le témoin sait qu'un certain nombre alla dans le ravin de Guéliésan; mais il ignore si là il y a eu combat.

Il dit ensuite qu'il n'y eut pas d'autres combats que ceux qu'il a racontés; mais les fuyards qui ne réussirent pas à se cacher furent tués; lui-même avec sa vieille mère, qu'il avait prise sur les épaules, se sauva vers Koul. En atteignant le ravin voisin du petit village Kurde de Vassili sa mère fut tuée d'un coup de fusil par un "homme du Gouvernement" coiffé d'un fez (le témoin ne peut préciser davantage) et il la laissa sans l'enterrer. Les Arméniens ne pouvant résister s'enfuyaient, et poursuivis par les soldats, ils jetaient même leurs enfants en se sauvant. Si le témoin en avait eu il les aurait laissés. Ceux de son frère furent ainsi abandonnés par leur mère; mais on les retrouva ensuite vivants.

La mère du témoin est le seul membre de sa famille qui ait été tué, mais lui-même a vu de ses propres yeux d'autres Arméniens être tués. Comme il fuyait il ne peut préciser qui a été tué ou non.

Ceux qui ne furent pas tués restèrent dans les montagnes pendant quarante jours se cachant derrière les rochers.

Le témoin connaît le nommé Serkis, de Chenik, entendu dans la séance du 5 Février (Procès-verbal No. 10), et qui se trouvait sur l'Antok-Dagh avec sa famille. Il les y a vus vivants, mais ils se sont enfuis dans une direction différente de la sienne et il ne sait s'ils sont actuellement morts ou en vie.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 6 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 34 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March 5, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Se présente pour la deuxième fois, un jeune garçon qui est déjà venu la veille. Il remet une requête, en disant que son père, villageois d'Agpi, venant à Mouch pour déposer devant la Commission, a été arrêté et emprisonné. Les Délégués demandent la comparution de cet homme.

Un villageois de Guéliéguzan, après avoir éprouvé des difficultés, pénètre dans la chambre de la Commission et présente une requête au Président.

Le premier témoin introduit et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Mamouk, fils de Hebo, de Guéliéguzan, marié; il ne peut dire son âge, paraît de 35 à 40 ans, est hospitalisé à Maruik, dans la plaine de Mouch.

Dès le commencement de sa déposition, ses gémissements, son attitude étrange et tourmentée font supposer aux Délégués que cet homme n'a pas sa raison intacte.

Lui-même se plaint à diverses reprises d'être indisposé; et ses dernières réponses sont telles que son interrogatoire est interrompue et que sur la demande des Délégués le procès-verbal mentionne cet individu comme ayant paru au cours de sa déposition ne pas jouir de toutes ses facultés mentales.

Les Délégués néanmoins ne croient pas pouvoir se dispenser de consigner le résumé de ses déclarations. Il en résulte qu'après un combat qui dura deux jours à Chenik entre les villageois et les Kurdes Bekranli et Badikanli, ces derniers en compagnie des soldats, passèrent par Semal où se produisit pendant deux jours une nouvelle lutte avec les habitants de ce village. Au cours de ces deux combats, il y aurait eu, à ce que le témoin a entendu dire, six Arméniens tués, dont deux femmes. Les Kurdes et les soldats réunis atteignirent ensuite Guéliéguzan, où eut lieu un troisième combat qui dura un jour entre eux et les seuls habitants du village.

Le témoin, qui s'était enfui, n'a pris aucune part à cette dernière rencontre; mais il a entendu les coups de fusil et il a vu de loin les soldats, qui étaient avec les Kurdes dans un endroit nommé Medjink, et qui luttèrent du matin jusqu'au soir avec les Arméniens se trouvant à l'endroit nommé Husseindsik.

Il ne peut préciser le nombre des Arméniens, armés de fusils à pierre, qui ont pris part à ces différents combats; mais les Kurdes étaient plus nombreux et il estime qu'à Guéliéguzan les Arméniens atteignaient une cinquantaine.

D'après le témoin, les causes de ces luttes seraient les excitations de Damadéan et postérieusement celles de Mourad. Celui-ci venait à Guéliéguzan, où le témoin ne l'a pas pas vu, mais où, dit-il, il était reçu dans une maison que connaissent les Kiahias du village. Bedo, fils de Serko, Avé, fils de Vartan, les membres du Conseil des Veillards, Tato, Serko, Avé, Kiatib du village, et où il était nourri à tour de rôle par les habitants. Arrêté plus tard à Talori, Mourad fut emmené à Bitlis.

Le témoin attribue l'initiative des combats aux Kurdes Bekranli qui disaient aux Arméniens: "Vous avez des soldats parmi vous." Il est vrai, ajoute-t-il, que Mourad les excitait, mais il n'a pas enrôlé des soldats.

Sur l'Antok-Dagh ne se trouvaient que les habitants de Chenik et Semal avec leurs familles et leurs troupeaux et aucune lutte ne se produisit. Quant aux gens de Guéliéguzan, ils étaient dans le ravin de Guéliésan aux bergeries du nommé Bedo.

Après le combat à Guéliéguzan les Arméniens furent poursuivis dans les montagnes pendant trente-cinq jours. Les gens de Guéliéguzan étaient partis dans la direction de Kharzan, au ravin de Kelbastik.

Le témoin explique que de sa famille périrent à Pambouk-Turlassi, près de Hetink, à une heure de distance de Guéliéhenguévi et à deux heures de Guéliésan, ses deux cousins: Serkis, sourd-muet; Khazar, qui furent tués par les soldats et les Kurdes. Il ne l'a pas vu, mais a entendu leurs cris au moment où on les tuait.

Il ne sait pas s'il y a eu lutte à Guéliéhenguévi dont il était loin; mais il s'en produisit une à Guéliésan qui dura une demi-heure et où il y eut beaucoup de tués.

Postérieurement, il enterra lui-même une quarantaine de cadavres—hommes, femmes, et enfants—trouvés soit à Guéliésan même, soit à Pambouk-Turlassi.

Invité à désigner exactement les cadavres, il dit alors avoir enterré près de l'église cinquante enfants, dont une partie étaient mort de faim, et l'autre tués à coups de sabre ou de poignard, il ne sait au juste; plus quarante femmes. Le Président lui fait observer ses contradictions avec ses affirmations précédentes, et répond être malade, et ne pas savoir exactement ce qu'il dit.

En présence de cette déclaration et de l'état devenu évident, d'incertitude mentale du témoin, les Délégués interviennent alors et la Commission, d'accord avec eux, interrompt son interrogatoire.

Le deuxième témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Egho, fils de Kechick Merko, âgé de 40 ans, qui se trouve, d'après le témoin, à deux heures de distance environ de l'Antok-Dagh, Chenik, Semal, Guéliéguzan, et loin de Talori.

Invité à fournir les renseignements qu'il possède sur les événements de 1894, il dépose comme suit:—

Mourad, qui allait dans les trois premiers villages ci-dessus désignés, s'était emparé de l'esprit des habitants en leur disant: "Révoltons-nous, versons le sang et nous ferons une Arménie."

Mourad n'est jamais venu et n'a jamais fait de propagande dans les six ou sept villages de Koulp, dont est le témoin. Les Arméniens, grâce à la protection du Gouvernement, n'y ont jamais été molestés. Ils paient régulièrement leurs impôts. Entourés par les Kurdes, ils ont leur Aghas, et ces derniers pas plus qu'eux-mêmes n'auraient prêté l'oreille à de pareils conseils.

Le témoin ajoute que les Arméniens de Kavar n'étaient pas allés l'année dernière à leurs pâturages d'été habituels au Kourtik-Dagh; mais qu'obéissant aux inspirations de Mourad, ils se promenaient sur les routes en bandes armées, pour dépouiller et tuer les Kurdes qu'ils rencontraient, et s'emparer de leurs bestiaux. Ensuite ces mêmes Arméniens furent emmenés par Mourad sur l'Antok-Dagh. Ayant appris, à cette époque, que les Bekranli venaient aux pâturages, ils se portèrent à leur rencontre et un combat eut lieu. Les Arméniens leur volèrent leurs troupeaux, ainsi que ceux des Badikanli, qui étaient arrivés postérieurement. Pendant deux jours dura la lutte où Arméniens et Kurdes furent tour à tour vaincus et vainqueurs. Deux ou trois jours après les troupes arrivèrent. Les Arméniens les attaquèrent dans les environs de Guéliéguzan, sur les flancs de l'Antok-Dagh. Le combat dura de midi jusqu'au soir et les Arméniens s'enfuirent ensuite dans des directions différentes.

En réponse aux questions subséquentes qui lui sont posées, le témoin dit ignorer qui a incendié les villages, les Arméniens eux-mêmes ou d'autres qu'eux.

Il a entendu parler de Mourad par les gens de Kavar qui, dit-il, en contradiction avec sa déclaration antérieure, venaient trouver les gens de son village pour leur proposer de se réunir à eux. Il ne l'a pas vu lui-même, étant alors absent du village, mais il tient le fait du nommé Khazar, membre du Conseil des Anciens.

Il a entendu dire, que pendant leur fuite, des Arméniens avaient été tués. Mais il ne sait rien du meurtre de femmes ou d'enfants et il n'a pas vu de soldats poursuivant les fuyards.

Une partie d'entre eux étant venus à Hanzo n'en furent pas acceptés par les habitants; car leurs Aghas regardaient les Arméniens comme rebelles.

Interrogé sur la mort du prêtre Ohannès, il prête de lui-même serment qu'il n'a rien entendu y ayant trait.

Le troisième témoin, mandé par la Commission, se nomme Recho, fils de Guiorgue, Kiahia de Keguarvan, âgé de 20 à 25 ans.

Il répète, dans des termes identiques, le récit du témoin précédent. Il ajoute que Mourad, par l'entremise d'un berger, avait fait proposer aux gens de Keguarvan de se réunir à lui; mais à la suite d'un Conseil, tenu par le Kiahia du village, Agop, le membre du Conseil des Anciens, Artin, et le témoin lui-même, ils répondirent à Mourad qu'ils resteraient fidèles au Gouvernement.

Le témoin a entendu dire qu'il s'était produit, entre Zoiavi et Guéliéguzan, sur

les flancs de l'Antok-Dagh, un combat entre les Arméniens et les soldats venus de Merguemouzan et dans lequel il y eut des morts des deux côtés; mais il n'a pas entendu raconter qu'il y eut des victimes parmi les Arméniens pendant leur fuite. Il ne sait rien du prêtre Ohannès.

Le quatrième témoin entendu est le nommé Gaspard, fils de Temo, âgé de 30 à 32 ans, du village de Pauah, mandé par la Commission.

Il répète également dans des termes identiques le récit déjà fait par les deux témoins précédents; mais d'après lui Mourad n'aurait excité que les quatre villages de Chenik, Semal, Guéliéguzan, et Talori.

Interrogé au sujet des combats entre les Arméniens et les troupes, il dit qu'ayant entendu des coups de fusil dont le son différait de celui des fusils Kurdes, il monta sur un endroit élevé, et de là vit sur les flancs de l'Antok-Dagh, à une heure de distance de Guéliéguzan une lutte se produire entre les Arméniens et les soldats; elle dura de midi jusqu'au soir.

Selon lui, il n'y a pas eu de combat sur l'Antok-Dagh entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens. Il ne sait rien soit du meurtre de femmes et d'enfants, soit de la mort du prêtre Ohannès.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRIVALSKY.

Inclosure 7 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 35 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March 6, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le Président, expliquant à ceux-ci les causes de l'emprisonnement du villageois d'Agpi, dont il a été question dans la séance de la veille, dit avoir appris du Mutessarif que l'arrestation de cet homme, qui avait eu lieu non pas à Mouch, au moment où il venait donner sa déposition, mais dans la plaine de Mouch, où il avait été surpris, déguisé, était due à de tout autres motifs que ceux invoqués par le requérant.

Les Délégués, sans mettre en doute les affirmations du Mutessarif, insistent, néanmoins, pour la comparution de ce villageois, afin d'entendre de sa bouche le lieu et les motifs de son accusation, et font observer, de plus, qu'en admettant que les arrestations dont il est l'objet sont exactes et fondées, les déclarations qu'il pourra faire relativement au village d'Agpi devront, quand même, être recueillies comme pouvant fournir d'utiles renseignements à l'enquête.

Les Délégués demandent, en outre, la comparution du villageois de Guéliéguzan qui a remis une requête dans la séance de la veille, et celle de l'Agha Kurde de Sassoun, nommé Hichman, détenu à Mouch, et cité par le nommé Erko. (Séance du 1er Février, 1895, Procès-verbal No. 7.)

Ils rappellent enfin au Président la résolution prise par la Commission dans sa séance du 8 Février (Procès-verbal No. 13) de procéder devant eux à la lecture immédiate des requêtes qui lui sont présentées, et à leur inscription au procès-verbal du jour, avec une analyse sommaire de leur contenu.

Les témoins entendus dans cette séance sont:—

1. Le nommé Polho, fils d'Alvédès, âgé de 30 ans, se disant Moukhtar de Nédran.

2. Le nommé Tavo, fils d'Atto, de Guéliémansour, âgé de 25 à 30 ans.

3. Le nommé Omer-ben-Ahmet, âgé de 50 à 55 ans, Moukhtar du quartier Kidjilo, de Nédran.

4. Le nommé Mollah Osman-ben-Suléiman, âgé de 50 à 55 ans, du même quartier que le témoin précédent.

5. Le nommé Boghos, fils de Khazar, de Guéliémansour, membre du Conseil des Anciens, âgé de 50 à 54 ans.

Les quatre premiers témoins, invités successivement par le Président à dire ce qu'ils savent concernant les événements qui se sont passés sur l'Antok-Dagh l'année précédente, font tous le même récit et dans des termes identiques à ceux employés par les trois derniers témoins entendus dans la séance du 5 Mars (Procès-verbal No. 33), les nommés Egho, Recho, et Gaspard.

Le nommé Potho, fils d'Avédès, à l'encontre des autres témoins, qui parlent de deux à trois jours, fixe à une semaine l'intervalle qui s'étend entre le combat des Kurdes et des Arméniens et celui que ces derniers livrèrent aux soldats près de Guéliéguzan.

En outre, ce même témoin, interrogé sur la source d'où il tient les propos révolutionnaires qu'aurait tenus Mourad aux villageois de Kavar, répond qu'un homme de Shenik en avait fait part aux bergers de son village.

Le témoin Tavo, fils d'Atto, n'ajoute aucun fait nouveau à la disposition précédente, si ce n'est que lors du combat de Guéliéguzan entre les soldats et les Arméniens il y aurait eu trente à quarante morts des deux côtés.

Le témoin Omer-ben-Ahmet, interrogé sur l'incendie des villages, dit qu'ils avaient été brûlés, il ignore par qui, avant l'arrivée des soldats et Chenik même, avant le combat entre Kurdes et Arméniens.

Il déclare, cependant, que pendant le séjour des Arméniens sur Antok-Dagh quelques-uns d'entre eux descendaient par intervalles dans leurs villages.

Au moment du combat près de Guéliéguzan entre eux et les troupes il n'a pas vu de Kurdes; il ne sait pas où ils étaient.

D'après lui, le Cheikh Méhémet, de Zeilan, ne se trouvait pas parmi les Kurdes pendant ces événements.

Les habitants de Nédran, déclare-t-il, en outre, avaient cessé depuis le printemps de fréquenter les villages de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan à cause des vols et des actes de brigandage commis par les habitants.

Ces trois témoins, interrogés par les Délégués Consulaires si leur propre village de Nédran ou de Guéliémansour a eu à souffrir d'un des actes de brigandage dont ils accusent les Arméniens de Kavar, répondent de façon négative et formelle.

La déposition du cinquième témoin, Boghos, fils de Khazar, ne diffère de celles précédemment entendues que par quelques détails. D'après lui, Mourad promettait aux Arméniens tous les secours dont ils pourraient avoir besoin, et les engageait à ne pas craindre, et à montrer du courage.

Il déclare que le combat entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens dura sept ou huit jours; il n'a pas vu lui-même celui qui suivit deux jours après près de Guéliéguzan entre ceux-ci et les soldats; mais le bruit des coups de fusil est venu jusqu'à lui, et il a entendu parler de cette rencontre par des gens qui étaient montés sur des hauteurs pour regarder ce qui se passait.

Après cette lutte les habitants de Guéliémansour, ayant peur des Arméniens, prirent la fuite.

Ce témoin répond également que son propre village n'a pas eu à souffrir d'un des actes de brigandage dont il accuse les Arméniens, qui ne faisaient du mal qu'aux Kurdes.

Le même témoin et Tavo, fils d'Atto, étant de Guéliémansour, invités de donner des renseignements sur deux Arméniens de leur village, nommés Serko et Tato, cités dans les dépositions d'Omer-ben-Pourto et Ahmet-ben-Hamo (séance du 28 Février, Procès-verbal No. 30), répondent: (Boghos) que le nommé Tato est parti pendant l'automne de 1893 du côté de Diarbekir, et qu'il ne connaît pas le nommé Serko; (Tavo) qu'il ne connaît ces deux individus que de nom, et qu'ils sont partis dans la direction de Diarbekir.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 8 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 36 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March 7, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le premier témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission se nomme Bédros, fils de Khakho, de Guéliéguzan, âgé de 25 à 30 ans, marié, se trouvant actuellement dans le village de Ounan.

Il résulte de sa déposition que le même jour que les gens de Chenik et Semal les habitants de Guéliéguzan emmenant avec eux leurs familles, leurs enfants, et

leurs troupeaux, prirent la fuite devant les soldats de l'armée régulière. Ce jour là il n'y eut pas de morts parmi les gens de Guéliéguzan, qui gagnèrent l'Antok-Dagh, où ils passèrent six jours. Ils y étaient depuis quatre ou cinq jours quand un petit combat eut lieu à Khassonen-Meegressi, près de la maison de Bedo, à une heure de distance environ du village, entre les soldats et un léger nombre de gens de Guéliéguzan, qui étaient descendus pour protéger leurs maisons, sachant que celles de Chenik et de Semal avaient été déjà brûlées, le témoin ne peut dire par qui. Les villageois avaient une centaine de fusils à pierre. La lutte, qui dura du matin jusqu'au soir, leur coûta trois ou quatre tués. Il n'y eut pas de morts parmi les soldats. Guéliéguzan fut mis à feu et les habitants remontèrent sur l'Antok-Dagh d'où, avec ceux de Chenik et Semal, ils prirent la fuite dans la direction de Koulp, Khian, Sassoun. Le témoin attribue cette fuite tour à tour à un combat qui avait eu lieu pendant deux heures, sur l'Antok-Dagh même entre les Arméniens, les Kurdes, et les soldats réunis.

Au bout d'un mois et demi environ, le témoin et le reste de sa famille gagna Guéliéguzan d'où n'y ayant pas de quoi se nourrir il fut, avec sa femme et ses deux autres filles et par l'intermédiaire de l'autorité emmené et hospitalisé à Ounan, dans la plaine de Mouch, où ils se trouvent tous actuellement. Interrogé si antérieurement au combat qui eut lieu entre les soldats et les Arméniens il y avait eu lutte entre ces derniers et les Kurdes, il répond affirmativement, mais il ajoute qu'il n'y eut pas de tués parmi les Arméniens.

Il explique ensuite que cette lutte avec les Kurdes se produisit en deux endroits, d'abord près de Chenik, puis au pied de l'Antok-Dagh. Les causes en auraient été un vol de gros bétail et de 100 moutons commis par les Almanli au préjudice d'un Moukhtar de Chenik. Les villageois étant allés reprendre les bestiaux volés rameuèrent en même temps, à ce que le témoin a entendu dire, vingt moutons et quatre ou cinq têtes de gros bétail. Les Kurdes étant venus alors sur les Arméniens et ayant tué un homme de Semal, les gens des trois villages se réunirent et il se produisit un combat, où les Arméniens étant en minorité furent vaincus par les Kurdes.

Les soldats de Mergnemouzan n'avaient pas pris part à la rencontre près de Chenik; ils en étaient séparés par une distance de deux heures et une montagne leur cachait le lieu du combat.

Le témoin, interrogé sur Mourad, dit qu'il venait à Guéliéguzan dans la maison de Bedo; mais lui-même ne l'y a pas vu.

Il explique en outre qu'avant la fuite sur l'Antok-Dagh il y avait en effet des villageois armés sur les pentes de la montagne, mais qu'ils étaient là pour protéger leurs troupeaux.

Aux questions qui lui sont posées sur un Kurde nommé Réchid, de Guéliéguzan, le témoin répond d'abord ne pas le connaître. Les noms de Ali Réchid ou Recho, Mehemet ou Meho lui étant cités, il dit ensuite se rappeler ces individus. Ils n'étaient pas avec les Arméniens sur l'Antok-Dagh mais à Besréovit, leurs pâturages, où ils étaient allés auparavant et où ils étaient restés quand les villageois partirent sur l'Antok-Dagh. Puis leurs moutons leurs ayant été volés par les Kurdes nomades ces mêmes Kurdes de Guéliéguzan étaient partis avec eux.

Comme à la suite des réponses contradictoires du témoin, il ne résultait pas clairement pour les Délégués qu'il avait voulu par nommément [*sic*] du Kurde Réchid, de Guéliéguzan, entendu dans la séance du 20 Février, Procès-verbal No. 23, les Délégués demandent la confrontation de ces deux individus, mais elle n'a pas lieu, le nommé Réchid n'ayant pu être rencontré dans la ville.

Le deuxième témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Stepo, fils d'Erko, de Gueliéguzan, âgé de 25 à 30 ans, marié, actuellement à Organos.

Il ressort d'une façon évidente de ses perpétuelles dénégations que le témoin ne veut pas répondre.

Il résulte néanmoins de son interrogatoire qu'il s'enfuit d'abord à l'Antok-Dagh, puis de là à Guéliésan, et de Guéliésan à Sassoun.

Interrogé pourquoi il s'était sauvé de l'Antok-Dagh, il dit que c'est parce que les soldats les tuaient mais comme il a pris la fuite il ne peut dire qui a été tué et où on a tué. Lui-même n'a pas vu que les soldats tuassent personne. Il explique ensuite que s'il s'est enfui de l'Antok-Dagh, c'est par peur des soldats qu'il avait vus venir à Guéliéguzan.

Le jour de sa fuite de l'Antok-Dagh et pendant lequel il entendit des coups de fusil il se sépara d'avec sa famille, composée de sa femme et d'un petit garçon. Après être lui-même resté quinze jours dans les bois, recueilli par les soldats, il

rentra dans son village, où il retrouva sa famille, qui n'a rien eu à souffrir de leur part.

Le témoin y a entendu prononcer le nom de Mourad, dont tout le monde parlait mais il ne sait pourquoi.

Le troisième témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Ohannès, fils de Boghos, de Guéliéguzan, âgé de 15 ans, se trouvant actuellement à Migrakom.

Son système de dénégations est le même que celui du témoin précédent. Il résulte cependant de ses déclarations qu'ayant entendu dire par les villageois que les soldats allaient venir pour les tuer il s'enfuit sept jours avant l'arrivée des troupes dans un endroit situé à un quart d'heure de distance du village, et que le jour où le son du clairon parvint jusqu'à lui il gagna un second endroit à une heure et demie de distance de Guéliésan, et y resta caché parmi les rochers.

Le jour où il quitta le premier de ces deux refuges jusqu'au soir et le lendemain il entendit en moins grande quantité des coups de fusil qui venaient de la direction de l'Antok-Dagh.

Rentré plus tard au village le témoin y trouva sa mère et son petit frère, son père et son autre frère étant morts l'année précédente. Les champs de Guéliéguzan étaient dévastés, toutes les maisons incendiées il ne sait par qui. Il n'a pas connaissance de maisons Kurdes à Guéliéguzan.

Après y être restés trois ou quatre semaines le témoin gagna Migrakom avec sa mère et son jeune frère, qui y mourut.

A la suite de l'audition de ce témoin, les Délégués Consulaires expriment au Président leur étonnement de ce que parmi les quatre familles des villageois de Guéliéguzan, réfugiés à Migrakom, ainsi qu'il résulte de la liste en possession du Président lui-même, on ait choisi un enfant pour le faire comparaître devant la Commission.

Le Président declare que c'est son opinion personnelle et fait immédiatement appeler le "Tabour Aghassi," Chef de Bataillon, Fenzi Effendi, auquel il adresse des observations pour le passé et des recommandations pour l'avenir.

Avant la fin de la séance une femme pénètre dans la chambre de la Commission. Meghrditch Effendi, présent en qualité de Drogman, déclare qu'elle est folle et mendie dans les rues de Mouch, où elle est connue. Les membres de la Commission partagent cette opinion.

Mais cette femme refuse de sortir et veut remettre une requête jusqu'alors soigneusement cachée par elle, entre les mains des Délégués. Ceux-ci adressent cette femme au Président, qui refuse de recevoir sa requête comme émanant d'une folle et qui ne consent à accepter cette pièce que quand les Délégués la lui remettent en mains propres.

Il résulte de la lecture de cette requête que la signataire porte plainte du meurtre de quatre membres de sa famille. La Commission décide de procéder immédiatement à son interrogatoire.

Il ressort de sa déposition, qui ne paraît pas celle d'une personne ne jouissant pas de sa raison, qu'elle se nomme Saro, fille d'Atto, veuve d'Apré, de Guéliéguzan, mort depuis plusieurs années. Sa famille se composait des personnes suivantes: son fils Toro, et les deux enfants de celui-ci, Serkis et Abraham, âgé de 2 ans; un autre fils, Kirko, quatre filles, Rebé, Varté, Oskin. Ces cinq derniers enfants âgés de 10 à 12 ans, et Mairam, âgée de 4 ans.

Le témoin raconte que les soldats tuaient les gens sur l'Antok-Dagh. Elle-même avec son fils Toro, les deux enfants de celui-ci, et sa fille Mairam s'enfuit vers Aghpi.

Pendant qu'ils se sauvaient, les soldats tuèrent Toro, Serbis, et Abraham, à coups de fusil, et Mairam à coups de pierre. Blessée elle-même, elle tomba évanouie. En revenant à elle elle remarqua une seconde blessure au poignet. La première était causée par la balle d'un fusil qu'on lui a dit être un fusil de précision.

Le témoin a vu des soldats mais ne sait pas par qui le coup a été tiré.

Les autres enfants qui sont restés vivants s'étaient séparés pendant la fuite. Elle ne les a revus qu'à Guéliéguzan, quand ils sont rentrés de la montagne. Ils s'y étaient nourris de terre, d'herbes, et de racines.

Invitée par le Président à désigner des personnes qui connaissent ses enfants, elle répond que tout le village les connaît, puis elle désigne nommément: Guiro et Attain, de Guéliéguzan; Eggho et Mardiros, mais elle ignore le lieu de leur résidence actuelle.

Les enfants survivants du témoin se trouvent dispersés dans de différents villages de la plaine.

En réponse au Président, qui lui fait observer que les soldats n'étaient jamais allés à Aghpi, elle insiste en affirmant qu'elle les a vue elle-même.

La Commission décide l'examen médical de ses blessures.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 9 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 37 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March 8, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le témoin entendu dans cette séance et mandé par la Commission se nomme Mardiros, fils de Nigo, de Chenik, âgé de 25 à 30 ans, célibataire, et se trouvant actuellement à Cheikhlan.

Il continue le système de dénégations, adopte par les témoins Stepo et Ohannès, entendus dans la séance précédente.

Il prétend n'avoir rien vu, attendu qu'il s'était enfui avant les autres villageois et qu'il s'est caché seul dans les bois et parmi les rochers.

On peut cependant conclure de ses déclarations:—

1. Que la fuite des habitants de Chenik est due à l'arrivée des soldats, que le témoin lui-même n'a pourtant pas vus; car il avait déjà pris la fuite.

2. Que des soldats venaient chaque année à Merguemouzan, près de Chenik, pour protéger les Arméniens contre les Kurdes. Cette année, c'est-à-dire en 1894, l'on disait dans le village que les soldats étaient venus pour piller les Arméniens.

3. Pendant sa fuite, le témoin entendit des coups de fusil et à son retour à Chenik, on lui a raconté qu'ils avaient avec les Kurdes une rencontre, suivie de l'arrivée des soldats.

4. Sur l'Antok-Dagh se trouvaient les habitants de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan avec leurs familles et une partie de leurs troupeaux, tous leurs effets étant restés dans leurs maisons. Le témoin a entendu dire aussi que les villageois s'étaient dispersés dans de différentes directions, à la suite d'un combat qui avait eu lieu sur l'Antok-Dagh; réunis ensuite par les autorités, ils furent amenés d'abord à leurs villages, puis hospitalisés dans ceux de la plaine de Mouch.

De la famille du témoin, qui se compose de neuf personnes, parmi lesquelles deux frères nommés Manouk et Erkio, personne n'a péri au cours de ces événements. Tous se trouvent dans la plaine de Mouch.

Le deuxième témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Manouk, fils de Nigo, de Chenik, âgé d'environ 45 à 50 ans, frère du témoin précédent.

Interrogé sur le combat qui s'est produit entre les Arméniens et les soldats, le témoin répond que les villageois de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan, et les soldats se sont battus entre Chenik et Guéliéguzan, à une montagne qu'on appelle aussi Antok.

Le témoin lui-même, voyant qu'on se tirait les uns les autres, s'enfuit vers Passour.

Les habitants des trois villages de Kavar, qui étaient ensemble sur l'Antok-Dagh, se sauvèrent dans des directions différentes et à ce qu'il a appris soit du nommé Sako, fils de Korké, de Chenik, soit d'autres personnes, les soldats brûlèrent trente-six villages dont ils tuèrent les habitants.

Lui-même sait que Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan ont été incendiés. Il ajoute en avoir vu monter la fumée deux ou trois jours après son départ du village et le jour même de sa fuite de l'Antok-Dagh.

Le témoin se sauva en y abandonnant sa femme et ses enfants. Après avoir erré dans les montagnes, il fut recueilli avec d'autres fugitifs et amené par l'autorité à Passour, où il retrouva sa famille qui y avait été conduite par un Kurde et d'où, après y être restés ensemble huit jours, ils furent tous renvoyés à leur propre village de Chenik.

Interrogé sur la cause de l'abandon précipité de sa femme et de ses enfants à l'Antok-Dagh, il explique qu'il n'a pas eu le temps de s'en occuper. On se battait à

une demi-heure de lui et il s'est sauvé. Une fille du témoin, âgée de 8 ans, s'est perdue pendant qu'ils fuyaient. Il ignore ce qu'elle est devenue, quoique jusqu'à présent il fasse des recherches à son égard.

Le troisième témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Stepan, fils de Manouk, de Semal, âgé d'environ 25 à 30 ans, marié.

Il affirme que les habitants de Semal se trouvaient au village, quand les Kurdes nomades et les soldats les attaquèrent. Ils s'enfuirent alors vers Guéliéguzan, d'où ils montèrent ensuite à l'Antok-Dagh. A Semal même il n'y aurait eu personne de tué, mais le village a été brûlé.

Entre Semal et Guéliéguzan cependant et plus près de ce dernier, il y eut des gens tués. Mais comme lui-même s'était enfui, il ne connaît ni le nom ni le nombre des morts.

Comme les fuyards étaient poursuivis par les soldats et les Kurdes mêlés, le témoin ne sait pas davantage qui d'entre eux a frappé.

Bloqués de nouveau sur l'Antok-Dagh par les troupes, les Arméniens s'enfuirent dans des directions différentes. Lui-même se sauva vers Sassoun en abandonnant sur la montagne sa famille qui, de son côté, avait pris la même direction et resta cachée dans la forêt. A son retour, après les événements, le témoin apprit que ses parents, dont les noms suivent, avaient disparu : son père, Manouk, et deux frères plus jeunes que lui, Khazar et Artin. Les autres membres de sa famille : sa mère, Gulé, deux petits frères, Ohannès et Mardiros, sa femme Khaté, avec leurs deux enfants, Khongas et Boghos, ont été retrouvés par lui sains et saufs.

Au milieu de l'automne, le témoin s'étant rendu, de la plaine de Mouch où il était alors à Guéliéguzan, vit dans un ravin près du village des ossements entremêlés à des cadavres, dont il ne saurait déterminer le nombre, et parmi lesquels il ne put reconnaître personne. Mais ayant trouvé non loin des fragments d'habits des morceaux de broderie d'un col de chemise de chalvar (pantalon) et de culottes, qu'il reconnut avoir appartenu à son père et à ses deux frères, il en a conclu qu'ils avaient été tués là.

Il résulte de ses autres déclarations que Semal aurait été attaqué avant Chenik. Lui-même n'a pas vu de ses propres yeux personne être tué, pendant que les Arméniens fuyaient de l'Antok-Dagh, et il n'a rien entendu dire à propos du prêtre Ohannès, de Semal.

Le témoin explique, en outre, d'une manière assez confuse, qu'en allant de Semal à Guéliéguzan les villageois furent rencontrés par les troupes, qui tuèrent ceux qui ne réussirent pas à se sauver.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 10 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 38 *of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of March* 9, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le Président donne lecture du Rapport Médical dressé par le Capitaine Bessim Ibrahim, Médecin attaché à la Commission d'Enquête ; le Capitaine Moustapha, Médecin du 4e Bataillon, 32e Régiment ; le Capitaine Vassif, Médecin du 23e Régiment de Cavalerie.

Le Dr. Margariti Saridé, Médecin de la Municipalité de Mouch, chargés de l'examen des blessures de la nommée Savo, entendu dans la séance du 7 Mars (Procès-verbal No. 36), prie les Délégués de faire connaître à la Commission si ce Rapport, dont la traduction est annexée ci-jointe au présent procès-verbal, leur paraît suffisant. Ceux-ci répondent faire leurs réserves au sujet d'un pareil document qui, dressé par des médecins ayant tous des attaches officielles, ne peut être considéré comme tout à fait probant et définitif et dont par suite les conclusions ne sauraient en aucune façon porter atteinte à la véracité possible des déclarations, énoncées par les témoins qui en sont l'objet. Les Délégués ajoutent que leurs observations portent aussi bien sur le Rapport Médical dont il est question que sur

celui relatif au nommé Ovak, et annexé au Procès-verbal No. 22, et enfin que sur tout autre document de même nature qui pourrait à l'avenir être établi dans des conditions identiques aux deux premiers.

La Commission décide alors de garder à sa disposition le nommé Ovak pour contrôler ses affirmations à l'aide des témoignages des femmes de Semal, s'étant trouvées à Guéliéguzan, qui n'ont pas encore comparu et qui sont activement recherchées.

Le premier témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission se nomme Avé, fils de Kalo, de Semal, âgé de 20 ans, marié, paysan, actuellement à Cheikhlön.

A toutes les questions qui lui sont posées, il répond n'avoir rien vu et ne rien savoir des événements de 1894 sur lesquels il est interrogé ; il nie même avoir connaissance qu'il ait jamais existé à Semal un prêtre du nom d'Ohannès.

Son père, Kalo, est mort depuis longtemps.

Les dix membres de sa famille dont les noms suivent : sa mère, Egso ; sa femme, Rehan, avec deux filles, Varté, Hanguine ; son frère, Bedo, avec sa femme, Jemé, et leurs enfants ; trois filles, Chouchan, Khalé, Mariam, et un fils, Kalo, sont tous vivants et se trouvent actuellement avec lui à Cheikhlön.

Le deuxième témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission se nomme Girbo, fils d'Agop, de Semal, âgé de 30 à 35 ans, marié, actuellement à Pertah.

De sa déposition résultent les quelques faits suivants.

Ayant entendu dire que les soldats allaient arriver à Semal, de peur il prit la fuite, tout seul, laissant sa famille et ne pensant qu'à se sauver lui-même. Il ignore ce qui s'est passé ensuite.

Il resta caché derrière les rochers dans les montagnes, c'est là qu'ayant rencontré les nommés Asatour, fils de Giro, et Khama, fils d'Ohan, de son propre village, il apprit d'eux que les soldats avaient tué beaucoup de gens de Semal et de Guéliéguzan, dans ce dernier endroit. Que le prêtre Ohannès étant allé avec un grand nombre de villageois au camp des troupes pour se rendre y avait été également tué ; mais le témoin ne sait rien au sujet de ceux qui l'accompagnaient.

Il a vu de loin, quand il était dans la montagne, les maisons de Semal brûlées, qu'il a retrouvées dans le même état à son retour.

Il n'a aucune connaissance de rencontre entre les Kurdes et les Arméniens.

D'après lui, les pâturages de Semal se trouvent à la fois à Khavars, situé entre Semal et Guéliéguzan et sur le Kotik-Dagh. Il ignore si les habitants de son village sont venus à ces derniers endroits en 1894.

Sa famille, qui s'était sauvée dans une autre direction que lui et qui le retrouva dans l'Antok-Dagh, se compose de six personnes : sa mère, Khané ; sa femme, Noubar ; son fils, Peto, et qui se trouvent tous actuellement avec lui à Pertah.

Quant à ses frères, Khazar et Khatcho, et la femme de ce dernier, Aivan, il les sait vivants, mais ignore où ils sont.

Le troisième témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Stepan, prêtre Arménien Grégorien, autrefois à Davolise, quartier de Talori, et maintenant dans le village Kurde de Djardjas, district de Khian.

Invité à fournir les renseignements qu'il possède sur les événements de 1894, il raconte que trois ou quatre ans auparavant Damadian, venu à Kavar, s'était emparé de l'esprit des villageois et les excitait à la révolte.

Les conseils que le témoin donna à cette occasion aux Notables de Talori ne furent pas écoutés. Ils lui répondirent de s'occuper de son ministère ecclésiastique. Le témoin porta l'ensemble de ces faits à la connaissance du Mutessarif de Guendj, qui refusa d'y ajouter foi.

En 1894, Mourad, accompagné d'un Diacre du Couvent de Tehanli, vint s'établir à Hartk, quartier de Talori, d'où il se rendait dans les villages de Kavar et où il recevait les visites constantes des Chefs et des Primats des dits villages. Il en poussait les habitants à se révolter et à se retirer avec leurs familles et leurs biens sur l'Antok-Dagh, mais ces derniers répondaient qu'ils devaient auparavant faire leurs récoltes. Néanmoins, ils se rendirent à ses conseils.

De l'Antok-Dagh, où ils étaient allés, les Arméniens descendaient pour enlever les bestiaux des Kurdes ; ils tuèrent même quelques Musulmans.

A cette époque, les Kurdes nomades commençant à gagner leurs pâturages d'été, furent attaqués par les Arméniens et le combat entre eux dura trois jours, au bout desquels chaque parti resta sur ses positions. Sur ces entrefaites, les Arméniens ayant remarqué l'arrivée des troupes envoyées pour se saisir de Mourad, les attaquèrent près de Guéliéguzan, où la lutte dura toute une journée.

Puis, ces mêmes Arméniens se portèrent à une nouvelle attaque sur ces mêmes troupes à Guéliésan sur la route de Talori, et commencèrent à s'enfuir dans des directions différentes.

A l'arrivée des troupes à Talori, où elles établirent leur campement, le témoin avec sa femme et ses enfants partirent pour le village Kurde Djardjas, où il s'installa.

Après trois jours de recherches, Mourad fut pris dans une caverne et envoyé à Mouch.

Au cours de ses autres déclarations le témoin affirme qu'à Talori il n'y eut aucun combat entre les habitants et les soldats; seuls des coups de fusil furent échangés entre les soldats assiégeant la caverne et Mourad et ses compagnons, qui ripostaient.

Le témoin lui-même, qui se trouvait dans les villages plus bas que Talori, a entendu le bruit de cette fusillade.

Quand les soldats y arrivèrent les habitants prirent la fuite pendant la nuit. Cinq ou six d'entre eux étaient déjà avec leurs familles sur l'Antok-Dagh, où ils faisaient partie des bandes armées.

Le témoin déclare d'abord ne pouvoir dire si les maisons de Talori sont brûlées, attendu qu'il a entendu à ce sujet les déclarations les plus contradictoires. Il dit ensuite avoir vu lui-même une partie des maisons incendiées avant l'arrivée des troupes; mais comme il n'a pas assisté à l'incendie, il ne peut dire s'il est dû aux Arméniens ou à d'autres qu'eux; car dans ces derniers temps il se tenait à l'écart des villageois.

Interrogé sur les maisons qui ont été brûlées, il déclare alors que jusqu'à présent il ne le sait pas, et ajoute que quoiqu'on le lui dise, il ne peut encore aujourd'hui y ajouter foi.

Il ignore, n'étant pas Moukhtar, le nombre des Kurdes venus dans le district de Talori en 1893.

Il n'a pas entendu dire que les Kurdes molestassent les Arméniens. Ce n'est que par ouï-dire qu'il connaît leurs agressions sur les Musulmans, et les événements qui se sont passés à l'Antok-Dagh. Il n'a entendu parler ni du meurtre de femmes et d'enfants, ni du prêtre Ohannès.

D'après lui, Spagank est proche de Guéliéguzan, éloigné de Talori, que dix à douze heures de distance séparent de l'Antok-Dagh.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Annex to Procès-verbal No. 38.

(Traduction.)

APRÈS en avoir été chargés par la Commission d'Enquête, nous avons procédé à l'examen de tout le corps de la femme nommée Saro, âgée d'environ 50 ans, du village de Guéliéguzan.

Par l'inspection médicale nous avons reconnu, sur la région du foie, une cicatrice de brûlure assez grande, de forme irrégulière, et qui, d'après son apparence, remonte à environ deux mois et demi ou trois mois. De plus, à la main droite, entre la paume et le poignet, au centre une cicatrice de plaie contuse, datant d'environ deux mois et demi ou trois mois.

En foi de quoi nous présentons le présent Rapport.

Le Capitaine Médecin attaché à la Commission d'Enquête;
(L.S.) (Signé) BESSIM IBRAHIM.
Le Capitaine Médecin du 4e Bataillon, 32e Régiment,
(L.S.) (Signé) MOUSTAPHA.
Le Capitaine Médecin du 23e Régiment de Cavalerie,
(L.S.) (Signé) PASSIF.
Le Médecin de la Municipalité de Mouch,
(L.S.) (Signé) DIMITRI MARGARITI SARIDI.

Mouch, le 9 Mars, 1895.

Pour traduction certifiée conforme:
(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

Inclosure 11 in No. 206.

Procès-verbal No. 39 of the Bitlis Commission of Inquiry.—Sitting of Mush 11, 1895.

TOUS les membres de la Commission sont présents, ainsi que les Délégués Consulaires.

Le premier témoin entendu, et mandé par la Commission, se nomme Asatour, fils de Merkó, de Semal, âgé de 30 à 35 ans, se trouvant actuellement à Havadorik.

Il résulte de sa déposition que les hommes de Semal se trouvant au Tchaï-Dagh, leur pâturage, tandis que les femmes étaient restées au village, furent, au nombre de 200 environ, attaqués par les Bekranli en quantité égale. Au cours de cette rencontre à coups de fusil, qui dura un jour, il n'y eut pas de blessés, mais trois ou quatre tués, du côté des Kurdes, et quatre ou cinq du côté des Arméniens. Le résultat en fut la fuite de ces derniers à l'Antok-Dagh avec leurs familles, qu'ils étaient allés chercher au village pour les emmener à la montagne, où ils avaient aussi leurs bestiaux. Ils y furent rejoints le lendemain par les gens de Chenik et de Guéliéguzan, fuyant également de leurs villages parce que les troupes y avaient placé leurs tentes.

Le lendemain du jour où il arriva à l'Antok-Dagh le témoin, ayant entendu des coups de fusil qui venaient de Guéliéguzan, et qu'il apprit plus tard provenir d'une rencontre dans ce village entre les Arméniens de Chenik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan, et les soldats, prit la fuite avec sa famille dans les montagnes entre Ichkhanzor et Guéliéguzan, vers Koulp. Pendant qu'ils se sauvaient vers le soir, les bruits de coups de fusil arrivaient jusqu'à eux et deux de ses enfants moururent de peur.

Il explique ensuite que devenus malades à la suite de leur frayeur, ils moururent en deux jours. Les coups de fusil étant éloignés, il ne pouvait voir les gens qui les tirait derrière eux.

Il resta un mois caché dans les montagnes derrière les rochers, et, après l'arrivée du Moushir Zekki Pacha, regagna son village, dont il trouva les maisons incendiées, les récoltes saccagées.

Le témoin, interrogé, ne savoir si Mourad, dont il entendit prononcer le nom à Semal, est venu ou non sur l'Antok-Dagh, s'il y a envoyé des gens à lui, ou dans les villages avant que les habitants en fussent partis. Le témoin n'est qu'un simple laboureur, et n'appartenant pas au Conseil des Anciens, ne peut rien connaître.

Le témoin dit avoir entendu dire seulement des nommés Pavo et Eghio, de Semal (entendus dans les séances des 15 Février et 2 Mars, Procès-verbaux Nos. 19 et 32), que leur prêtre Ohannès avait été tué avec cruauté au camp de Guéliéguzan par les soldats.

D'après lui le prêtre Ohannès se trouvait au Tchaï-Dagh avec ses paroissiens pendant leur rencontre avec les Bekranli, et était encore avec eux à l'Antok-Dagh le jour où le témoin prit la fuite.

Interrogé comment, n'étant resté qu'une seule nuit sur l'Antok-Dagh, il pouvait savoir que le prêtre Ohannès s'y trouvait au moment où lui-même s'en est éloigné, le témoin, après plusieurs réponses contradictoires, finit par déclarer que, d'après ce qu'il a appris plus tard des dits Pavo et Eghio, le prêtre Ohannès serait descendu à Guéliéguzan dans le combat qui s'y est produit.

Mais le témoin n'ayant fait cette déclaration que sur une demande comme dans ces mêmes termes et ajoutée de sa propre initiative par le Drogman Avedis Aghá, les Délégués réclament l'inscription au procès-verbal de la séance du jour des circonstances dans lesquelles cette question a été posée par le Drogman et cette réponse obtenue du témoin. Le Président y consent, mais faute de temps, remet cette inscription au lendemain.

Au moment de la rencontre des gens de Semal avec les Kurdes au Tchaï-Dagh, les troupes de Merguemouzan, qui en sont éloignées d'une heure et demie environ et du campement desquelles on pouvait voir le lieu du combat, y restèrent tout à fait étrangères.

La famille du témoin se compose de sa femme Khatché et ses deux fils: Melik,

âgé de 6 à 7 ans; Miko, âgé de 4 à 5 ans; ses deux autres fils morts pendant la fuite se nommaient Arakel et Parsegh, âgés de 4 à 5 ans.

Quant à sa mère Rehan, elle succomba à Semal après leur retour.

Le second témoin entendu et mandé par la Commission est le nommé Gopé, fils d'Avdik, âgé de 65 à 70 ans, se disant Moukhtar de Mezré, quartier de Talori.

Il répète le même récit que le prêtre Stephan, entendu dans la séance précédente, en ce qui concerne les excitations de Mourad aux Arméniens, leur depart à l'Antok-Dagh, leur combat avec les troupes et l'arrestation de Mourad.

D'après le témoin les sept quartiers qui composent Talori, distants les uns des autres d'une à deux heures, quatre seulement étaient dans les mains de Mourad, dont l'influence ne s'exerçait pas sur les trois autres, plus rapprochés des Kurdes et dont les habitants restaient éloignés de Mourad, des agissements duquel le témoin avait donné connaissance au Mutessarif de Guendj, Moustapha Pacha, quand ce dernier se trouvait à Passour. C'est à Hartk que Mourad avait sa résidence dans la maison du nommé Gaspard, où se trouvait avec lui sa bande, composée d'une vingtaine de brigands, parmi lesquels des Arméniens de Kavar et trois ou quatre jeunes gens du Monastère de Tchanli. C'est de là qu'il se rendit à Chénik, Semal, et Guéliéguzan, dont les habitants venaient également le trouver.

Le témoin explique que pour ne pas tomber dans les mains soit des Arméniens, soit des Kurdes, lui et les autres habitants de Mezré s'enfuirent dans un village Kurde, d'où il revint dix jours après, à l'arrivée du Mushir Zekki Pacha, qui rétablit l'ordre. Le quartier de Mezré qui n'est composé que de sept maisons et où le témoin se trouve actuellement, n'a pas été brûlé; mais il a entendu dire que des autres quartiers de Talori soixante maisons avaient été incendiées.

D'après lui aucun incident autre que la prise de Mourad ne se serait passé à Talori.

Il donne comme quartiers de Talori les huit noms suivants: Davolik, Pourh, Hôlovik, Härtk, Mezré, Hakmank, Halorik, Eki.

Le village de Spagank, éloigné de Hartk de deux heures, de Guéliéguzan d'une demi-journée environ, dépend du district de Sassoon. Talori même est distant d'un jour de marche de Guéliéguzan.

A la fin de la séance pénètrent avec quelque difficulté dans la chambre de la Commission à laquelle ils présentent leurs requêtes, les nommés Kevo, fils de Gaspard, de Halorik, et Migro, fils de Kiro, de Hakmank.

La Commission décide de les entendre dans la séance du lendemain.

Le Président lève la séance.

(Signé) M. VILBERT.
H. S. SHIPLEY.
M. PRJVALSKY.

No. 207.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 324.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 16, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a letter which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch relative to the situation at Moush, Erzeroum, and the neighbourhood.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 207.

Paper communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

LA SITUATION À MOUCHE, À ERZEROUM, ET AUX ENVIRONS.

Résumé d'un Rapport arrivé d'Erzeroum, en date du 27 Février (v. s.), 1895.

DE même qu'à Bitlis et en plusieurs autres endroits, le Gouvernement a usé aussi de pression à Mouche pour obliger les Arméniens de se déclarer contents de l'administration actuelle et des procédés du Gouvernement en signant une Pétition de remercîement. Les nommés Nazareth Effendi, Ohannès Effendi, et Boghos Effendi, membres de différents Conseils Gouvernementaux, ont été invités à signer cette Pétition. Les deux premiers ont présenté leur démission pour se soustraire à l'obligation d'accéder à ce désir, et le troisième, afin de ne pas assumer la responsabilité d'une déclaration aussi contraire à la vérité, s'est tiré de l'affaire, en contentant la cupidité de quelques fonctionnaires avec une somme de £ T. 160.

Les Délégués Européens ayant eu vent de l'affaire, le Gouvernement a fait retirer la démission des deux premiers. Nous ignorons si la somme payée par le troisième a été restituée.

Rapport en date du 6 Mars (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

La recrudescence du fanatisme parmi les Musulmans d'Erzeroum est de jour en jour plus ostensible. Des conciliabules nocturnes, dans lesquels les projets les plus funestes pour les Chrétiens sont discutés, se répètent tant à Erzeroum qu'en plusieurs autres endroits.

Les Turcs menacent les Arméniens des plus grands méfaits, et la sécurité publique court de très sérieux dangers. Les vexations dues, surtout, aux brigades de perception d'impôts, se multiplient dans les villages. La situation de la population rurale Arménienne est plus précaire que jamais.

La décision du Gouvernement de mettre la garnison d'Erzeroum sur le pied de guerre et la distribution de cartouches aux soldats, qui en a été la conséquence, ont été autant de nouvelles causes d'excitation pour les Turcs. Depuis cette distribution, les menaces ainsi que des incidents regrettables qui en proviennent, se sont notablement augmentés.

Adresser des paroles outrageantes à un Arménien, le menacer et le battre publiquement sont devenus des faits journaliers. Les femmes Arméniennes sont exposées aux plus honteuses insultes quand elles passent dans les rues. Il y a quelques jours un soldat a battu un orfèvre Arménien au point de mettre sa vie en danger. Un autre soldat a crié dans le magasin des Frères Kaytandjian, par suite d'un différend provenant d'un achat, que tous les kéafirs seraient dépiécés après dix jours.

D'après les renseignements qui nous parviennent, la même situation règne dans les provinces environnantes, où les Arméniens se trouvent également en danger.

Dans les villages de la vallée d'Erzeroum les brigades de perception vendent le bétail des paysans, leur unique richesse, et leur gagne-pain pour les travaux d'agriculture. Les lits et autres meubles de ceux qui ne possèdent pas de bestiaux sont transportés à Erzeroum, vendus aux enchères, et le montant retenu pour dettes d'impôts.

Les paysans, ne pouvant plus rien attendre du Gouvernement, qui ne veut pas même écouter leurs doléances, s'adressent souvent aux Consuls. Comme les alentours des Consulats sont souvent surveillés, plusieurs de ces paysans ont été arrêtés et n'ont recouvré la liberté qu'avec la condition expresse de ne plus faire de pareilles démarches, taxées de contraire aux devoirs de sujétion.

Rapport en date du 12 Mars (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

Vers le milieu du mois de Décembre dernier des Turcs, habitant le village de Tchipot (district de Sper), avaient voulu s'approprier de force quelques champs appartenant aux habitants Arméniens du dit village. Ceux-ci ayant essayé de s'opposer à cet acte d'injustice, les Turcs ont attaqué le village avec des armes et ont commis toutes espèces de méfaits. Treize personnes, dont les noms suivent, ont été blessés:—

Meguerditch Kaprielian, Toross Kaprielian, Ohannès Der-Kevorkian, Vartan Der-Kevorkian, Khazar Der-Kevorkian, Khazar Kaprielian, Agop Khazarian, Kirkor Babayan, Piloss Arakelian, Kinoss Eramian, Kalousd Serkissian, Agop Minassian, Hampartzoum Arakelian.

Les Turcs, entrant dans les maisons, ont fait subir les derniers outrages à plusieurs femmes mariées et à des vierges. Presque tous les bestiaux du village ont été enlevés. Pendant l'attaque, une femme Arménienne, nommée Martha, et un enfant, ont été

tués. Depuis, personne n'a osé quitter le village. Les femmes surtout sont obligées de se cacher dans leurs demeures, craignant de subir de nouveaux outrages.

Ces faits ont produit la terreur dans tous les villages environnants, et, depuis, aucun habitant de ces villages, qui ne sont pourtant distants de la ville que d'environ une journée, n'a osé venir à Erzeroum.

Le comble a été mis à ces malheurs par un Capitaine de Gendarmerie, préposé à la perception des impôts, qui s'étant rendu à Tchipol après ces événements a, par ses paroles, encouragé les malfaiteurs et pressuré la population par des exactions de toute nature. Il a aussi fait trouer le toit de la maison d'une belle dame Arménienne, s'y est introduit de force et a assouvi son immonde passion sur la pauvre femme, malgré une résistance désespérée.

Résumé de deux Rapports en date du 20 et 27 Mars (v. s.), 1895, arrivés d'Erzeroum.

C'est un devoir de conscience pour nous d'insister de nouveau sur les dangers de jour en jour plus grave que la population Arménienne court, par suite du manque total de sécurité.

Ce n'est que grâce à une surveillance très sévère qu'un massacre général a été prévenu ; cette surveillance passagère, due aux instances des Consuls, peut manquer et alors les conséquences d'une situation désespérée peuvent devenir incalculables.

Nous citons ici, comme une nouvelle preuve des excès auxquels se livre la soldatesque Turc, l'incident suivant,

Un Commandant Turc a battu, avec son sabre dégainé, il y a quatre ou cinq jours, un négociant Arménien nommé Ohannès Hazarabetianz, dont le domestique, nommé Tatéoss, a également reçu plusieurs blessures à la tête.

Le Commandant, en commettant ce crime, a crié que tous les Arméniens seraient passés à la file de l'épée, comme les Arméniens de Sassoun, et que leurs femmes et leurs filles seraient conduites aux harems des Musulmans, &c.

Hazarabetianz et son domestique se sont dispensés de s'adresser au Gouvernement, sûrs qu'ils étaient d'avance de l'inutilité de toute démarche. Mais les Consuls étrangers ont fait des représentations au Gouverneur-Général, sur quoi le Chef de la Police, Servet Bey, s'est adressé à un subterfuge vraiment machiavélique pour déplacer les responsabilités dans cette affaire. Le dit Commissaire appelant auprès de lui l'un des blessés, le domestique Tatéoss, lui présente un papier pour signer ; Tatéoss ne sachant pas lire le Turc demande à être renseigné sur le contenu du papier et refuse de donner sa signature sans savoir ce qu'on lui fait dire. Servet Bey, voyant qu'il sera impossible d'obtenir le consentement de Tatéoss, lui fait des avances pour une grande rémunération pécuniaire, disant que par le dit papier Tatéoss déclarera s'être blessé de propos délibéré par l'instigation des Consuls étrangers et d'en avoir accusé le Commandant, et, menaçant, en même temps, le domestique de terribles châtiments si jamais il osait refuser.

Servet Bey disait, d'ailleurs, que, faisant cela, Tatéoss aurait simplement avoué la vérité, car son enquête avait surabondamment prouvé que les faits s'étaient passés dans ce sens.

Le pauvre domestique comprenant dans quel piège on voulait le jeter, a refusé de signer le papier.

Le lendemain Servet Bey a fait appeler le domestique et après avoir dit que sa proposition de la veille provenait uniquement du but d'éprouver son honnêteté, a de nouveau présenté le papier déclarant, cette fois, que c'était tout simplement une requête adressée au Conseil de Guerre pour demander justice contre le Commandant. Mais le domestique comprenant que la requête était rédigée dans des termes lui faisant perdre tout droit, a refusé de signer, prétextant qu'il était décidé à ne pas porter plainte.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 20 Mars (v. s.), 1895, arrivé d'Erzeroum.

La surexcitation des esprits contre l'élément Chrétien menace les plus grands dangers.

Si les Puissances ne s'adressent pas à des mesures énergiques et si un état de choses stable n'est pas créé avant le départ des Délégués Européens assistant la Commission de Sassoun, il est plus que probable que de très graves troubles éclateront ici.

La Profanation d'une Eglise à Arapguir.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 17 Avril (v. s.), 1895, arrivé d'Arapguir (Vilayet de Mamouret-ul-Aziz).

Il y a six jours, une croix en bois avait été pendue à la porte de l'Eglise Arméno-Catholique d'Arapguir portant sur un papier collé dessus les mots suivants :—

" Arméniens, Grégoriens, Catholiques, et Protestants, embrassez la seule religion vraie, la religion Musulmane. Si vous refusez vous serez massacrés !"

Le Chef Spirituel des Arméniens Catholiques d'Arapguir a présenté la croix avec le placard au Gouvernement local.

Dans la nuit de Samedi, 16 Avril, le cadavre d'une caniche décapitée a été jeté dans la Cathédrale Arménienne d'Arapguir. Un placard collé à la croix, qui avait été attaché à la queue de cette caniche, portait les mots suivants :—

" Les Américains, Français, Russes, Anglais, Grecs, Bulgares, Italiens, et Arméniens se sont révoltés, ainsi que les autres nations. On les corrigera avec les armes, en commençant par les Arméniens. Embrassez la seule religion vraie ; le salut est là."

Au revers de la croix il était écrit : " O Giaours, qui vous révoltez, votre fin est bien proche. Vive notre Empire !"

Le placard était écrit en caractère "suluss" et avec une calligraphie telle qu'aucune doute, quant à son origine Musulmane, n'était possible.

La tête et un pied du chien avaient été jetés, en même temps qu'une croix portant le même placard, dans la cour du temple des Arméniens Protestants. Il est à remarquer que ce temple se trouve tout près de la bâtisse servant de caserne à la police.

Dans la matinée de Dimanche, 300 personnes de la population Arménienne ayant entendu cette profanation se sont réunies devant l'Evêché Arménien, et ont demandé du Métropolitain *ad interim* de faire les démarches nécessitées afin de mettre fin à cette situation intolérable.

Le Caïmacam d'Arapguir, accompagné du Commissaire de la Police, du Commandant de la Gendarmerie, et de plusieurs agents, s'est rendu sur les lieux pour se livrer à une enquête.

On a trouvé une échelle dont on s'était servi pour arriver jusqu'à la fenêtre et jeter le cadavre dans l'église.

Un Turc a réclamé, plus tard, cette échelle, déclarant en être le propriétaire. La croix en bois et le placard sont gardés à l'Evêché. Les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement ont dressé un procès-verbal dans lequel la profanation est présentée sous des couleurs tout à fait contraires à la réalité.

Nouveaux Incidents dans le Village d'Andréass.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 14 Avril (v. s.), 1895, arrivé du village d'Andréass, dépendant du district de Soukchéri (Sandjak de Chabine-Kara-Hissar, Vilayet de Sivas).

Les tragiques incidents dont notre village a été le théâtre lors des tortures infligées aux prisonniers Arméniens, arrivés de Chabine-Kara-Hissar, sont trop récents pour qu'il soit nécessaire d'y revenir. Notre Caïmacam Tchétchen Zadé Djavid Bey, gendre du Gouverneur de Kara-Hissar, est un vrai tyran. Il a pour bras droit un nommé Mehmed Ali, qui était condamné pour crime sous l'administration de Memdouh Bey, ex-Vali de Sivas, et qui, depuis, a été acquitté et nommé Juge d'Instruction et Président de la Municipalité.

Comme une nouvelle preuve des vexations commises par ces personnes, nous devons signaler les recherches qui ont été exercées, le 3 de ce mois, dans la majeure partie de nos maisons, par cinq fonctionnaires du Gouvernement auxquels accompagnait une foule de 200 Turcs armés. Ces Turcs, divisés en des brigades de dix personnes, entraient dans les maisons et agissaient avec la dernière cruauté envers leurs habitants.

Ibrahim Bey, oncle de Djavid Bey, et Chef du Secrétariat de notre Caza, ainsi que Hakki Effendi, crieur public de notre Gouvernement, ayant publiquement déclaré, il y a quelques jours, que les Arméniens seraient massacrés, le peuple a cru que cette menace allait recevoir son exécution. Aussi, la terreur a-t-elle été bien vive dans la population lors de ces recherches.

Voici une autre preuve encore de l'esprit qui préside aux agissements de Djavid Bey :—

Il y a cinq mois environ, le bandit Kassim, fils du Chef des brigands Guiavour Ali, qui a été condamné à quinze ans de prison par le Tribunal Criminel de Sivas, était venu à Andréass, en l'absence du Caïmacam, et attaquant le quartier Arménien, avait voulu enlever quelques jeunes Arméniennes. La résistance qui a été opposée à la réalisation de ce dessein, a augmenté la fureur du bandit, qui a fait feu, à droite et à gauche, et très cruellement battu les Arméniens qui lui tombaient entre les mains.

Le Gouvernement local ne pouvant agir autrement en présence d'une si flagrante attaque, a arrêté Kassim, qui a été emprisonné. Mais Djavid Bey, à son retour, a fait élargir le bandit, en le récompensant publiquement pour avoir maltraité les Arméniens.

Le Gouverneur-Général de Sivas ayant demandé dernièrement si Kassim se trouvait à Andréass, Djavid Bey a fait chercher le bandit dans sa ferme et a répondu que celui-ci ne se trouvait pas dans le pays.

No. 207*.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 21. Consular.)

Pera, May 15, 1895.

My Lord,

IN the event of the reforms in the Armenian provinces which have been recommended by the three Powers being adopted by the Sultan, some time will be required to put them in force, and it must be expected that serious difficulties will be raised by the local authorities to their complete execution. It will be necessary, therefore, for the Powers to exercise strict supervision and to maintain agents at the provincial seats of government to watch closely the proceedings of the Valis and to furnish the Embassies with such reports as will enable them to bring constant pressure to bear on the Commission of Control and the Porte.

During the first few years of the new state of things when this control must be exercised at many different points, the members of the regular Consular service will not be sufficient for the purpose, and I would suggest that a certain number of Military Vice-Consuls should be appointed for a limited term, who might be sent to any places in Asia Minor where their services are required.

We are already provided with Consular officers at Erzeroum, Van, and Diarbekir, although it would be desirable to replace the Armenian Vice-Consul at the latter place by an Englishman. There should be English Vice-Consuls at Bitlis, Sivas, and Khurput, and probably at Adana. I would suggest that in the first instance four temporary Vice-Consuls should be named, their number to be increased, if necessary, to six. My Russian colleague has informed me that he intends to recommend the appointment of Military Vice-Consuls to his Government.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 208.

Sir H. Wyndham to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 42. Confidential.)

Bucharest, May 14, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith a précis of what purports to be a letter from the Armenian Committee in London and in Marseilles, and to have been found on Archbishop Vélhabétian, and published in a Liberal paper of Bucharest, "La Patrie," of the 2nd instant. This letter contains instructions apparently to the Presidents of Committees in Armenia as to how to bring about a revolution there, and recommends amongst the provocative measures to be adopted the cutting of telegraph wires, the arrest of functionaries, the burning of public offices, the assassination of high officials, the seizure of Government funds and of arms, and the liberation of prisoners. It recommends that telegrams should be sent on the eve of the revolution to Europe through the English Committee at Cyprus.

In the course of a conversation which I had to-day with M. Ghika, the Secretary-General of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, I asked him if he had by chance seen this letter, and he at once replied that the Foreign Department had received it from the Ministry of the Interior, that it was printed in Armenian in the form of a placard, that it emanated from the Armenian Committee at Geneva, and adding, "What is dangerous in this fact is that that Committee is in communication with Russian Nihilists."

I asked M. Ghika if he knew how the Minister of the Interior had obtained possession of this document, and he replied that M. Calargi would not say ("Il n'a pas voulu le dire, pas même à moi").

I also observed that it bore no date; he said that that was the case.

M. Ghika then went on to say that Reschid Bey, the Turkish Minister here, was constantly urging the Government to take steps against Armenian agitators, and to expel them from the country; that the Government replied to Reschid Bey that they would do all they could to prevent agitation of an unfriendly nature to the Turkish Government, but that they could not expel people against whom there was no proof of having committed an offence. But M. Ghika said, "The Armenians are very clever in avoiding giving offence, for they send telegrams through Roumanians." And he gave me a telegram to the President of the meeting on Armenia lately held at St. James' Hall, translation of which is herewith inclosed, and which was, he said, forwarded through M. Bonaki, a Senator of Galatz, who is the usual channel for the transmission of Armenian complaints from this country, and for which he cannot be interfered with in Roumania.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure 1 in No. 208.

Extract from "La Patrie" of Bucharest of May 2, 1895.

(Translation.)
Mgr. Véhabétian,

LES manifestes qui vous ont été envoyés vous ont appris comment il fallait agir et comment il fallait se garer des calomnies des délateurs.

Par la présente nous donnons confidentiellement les instructions nécessaires aux Présidents des Comités.

La nouvelle de l'arrivée à leur destination des objets expédiés par les Comités Nihilistes et Slaves, et autres du même genre, nous est parvenue. Tâchez de les utiliser et d'en profiter; mais il faudrait tenir vos démarches secrètes. Respectez la règle générale qui dit, "l'union fait la force" en rétablissant la concorde entre les Chefs qui se trouvent là-bas.

Les objets nécessaires pour 1,000 personnes ont été envoyés et les instructions transmises concernant la dynamite. Il faut envoyer nuitamment 300 cavaliers à Adana, 60 à Piasse, et 200 à Marche; ceux-ci doivent être énergiques dans leurs attaques. Il faut observer le plus grand secret sur ces mouvements. Vous devez commencer vos menées révolutionnaires au reçu d'un télégramme de notre part ainsi conçu: "Priez pour nos morts." Jusqu'alors, tâchez de circonvenir les autorités. Il vous importe de tromper surtout les Valis (Gouverneurs-Généraux), les Mutessarifs (Gouverneurs), et les Caïmacams (Sous-Gouverneurs) par la flatterie et par le plus grand attachement, de façon à ne rien leur laisser soupçonner sur les démarches des Arméniens. En un mot, il est indispensable de gagner la plus grande confiance de ces fonctionnaires. C'est en coupant les fils télégraphiques, en arrêtant les fonctionnaires, en incendiant les bureaux de l'Administration, en assassinant les fonctionnaires supérieurs, en mettant la main sur la caisse du Gouvernement et sur autres endroits où se trouvent de l'argent, en s'emparant des armes et en relâchant les prisonniers, que l'action révolutionnaire doit se faire. Il faut faire parvenir des télégrammes en Europe au sujet de la révolution par l'entremise du Comité Anglais de Chypre, la veille du soulèvement. Les Comités de la grande Arménie agiront de même.

Les révolutionnaires de l'Amérique arriveront travestis en Derviches, ceux d'Athènes en villageois, ceux de France en bergers Kurdes, ceux d'Angleterre en softas, ceux de Suisse en chameliers, et ceux d'Italie en Albanais, pour se joindre les uns aux autres. Les volontaires d'Allemagne rejoindront les révolutionnaires en fellahs. Nous avons obtenu d'une manière indirecte et officieuse le consentement de l'Empereur de Russie, de la Reine d'Angleterre, du Roi d'Italie, et du Président de la République Française à la mise à exécution de ce projet; ne reculez donc devant rien et continuez secrètement vos démarches. Excitez et encouragez les esprits de toutes les classes de la population par des nouvelles et insinuations alarmantes.

L'union des Circassiens avec les émigrés nous sera très utile. Cent personnes de Kharpout sont arrivées saines et sauves en Amérique. Les jeunes gens de Zeitoun doivent entrer nuitamment de l'endroit que vous connaissez dans le bateau. On pourra atteindre le but en utilisant pour la correspondance avec Van et Erzeroum des hommes travestis en prêtres mendiants Mormmites. L'organisation de la bande des brigands à Zeitoun n'a pas répondu à notre but. L'organisation de la bande de brigands de Marache et d'Aintab est fort bien. Exécutez attentivement les instructions précédemment envoyées pour l'organisation des bandes de brigands. L'habit Circassien suffit pour atteindre le but. Le moment n'est pas encore venu pour la transmission des instructions que vous demandez au sujet des brigands Kurdes et Persans d'Alechkerd, Bayazid, et Djeulamek. Le Schah de Perse a promis de tout temps d'appuyer les menées révolutionnaires des Arméniens. Les volontaires de Karabagh rendront de grands services. Les volontaires Géorgiens, Slaves, et Cosaques se préparent avec l'assistance secrète des officiers d'État-Major Russes. Les Comités en Bulgarie répondent à notre désir et s'occupent toujours des exercices militaires. Nous sommes aussi satisfaits cette année des progrès de nos hommes se trouvant dans les écoles et armées de l'Europe et de l'Amérique. Vous devez commencer à faire maintenant la concurrence aux autres Comités révolutionnaires et travailler du côté de Klekia. La Russie et la France ont fait une alliance pour une troisième guerre en Orient. Nous trouverons dans cette guerre le salut de notre nation. Le Comité qui se trouve en Europe vous envoie de l'argent, quoiqu'il en reçoive peu. Faites des progrès dans la confection des armes. N'envoyez pas vos enfants aux écoles Turques, pour qu'ils ne sympathisent pas avec les Turcs. Écrivez-nous le nombre de l'effectif

de l'armée Ottomane en nous envoyant une carte de la localité. Tâchez de préparer beaucoup d'hommes et de percevoir beaucoup d'argent. La Russie et l'Angleterre, envisageant la question Arménienne sous différents points politiques, travaillent à l'aide de certains moyens ignorés par le Gouvernement Ottoman pour les intérêts des Arméniens.

Aujourd'hui l'Arménie est considérée par la Russie comme une nouvelle et seconde Bulgarie, par l'Angleterre comme une nouvelle Égypte, et par la France comme une nouvelle Tunisie et Algérie.

Nos compliments et vœux.

Inclosure 2 in No. 208.

Telegram from Armenian Colony in Roumania to President of Anglo-Armenian Meeting at St. James' Hall.

(Translation.)

Braila, May 6, 1895.

Sir,

EXILED from our country, and exposed to unheard-of acts of violence and cruel arrests and murders, we await with great anxiety the powerful voice of your avenging justice. Our unhappy parents, our wives, and our children are suffering from hunger and want. Threatened by sword and bayonet they behold the devastation of their hearts. They direct their eyes filled with tears to you, Sir, and implore your energetic protection in the name of Christianity and of humanity. In this hour of trial and of agony, we, Armenians, beseech you to save us, for later it will be too late.

In the name of the Armenian Colony,

(Signed) Dr. STEPHAN GULAUMIAN, *President.*

No. 209.

Sir E. Malet to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 115. Confidential.)

Berlin, May 18, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 95, Secret, of the 25th ultimo, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that Baron von Marschall told me yesterday, with reference to the scheme of reform in Armenia, which has been submitted to the Sultan by the Ambassadors of England, France, and Russia, that the Emperor had instructed Prince Radolin, before he quitted Constantinople, to give the Sultan good advice, and to recommend him to change his system of administration in his provinces in Asia Minor; but that the Sultan, instead of accepting this advice in the spirit in which it was tendered, regarded it as the result of an intrigue against him on the part of his own Grand Vizier.

Now, however, His Majesty had applied to the Emperor for his good offices to moderate the action of the three Powers; and Baron von Marschall said that a prompt answer had been sent to the effect that the Sultan had much better give way to their demands, and that Germany could not intervene.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDWARD B. MALET.

No. 210.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 20.)

(No. 184.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 20, 1895, 6·30 P.M.

MR. BOYAJIAN reports by telegraph that fifty-five Armenian labourers of Sassoon who lately left Diarbekir to return to their home under the protection of friendly Kurds were attacked on their way by Rushkotan Kurds, friends of the Sheikh of Jeilan, who plundered them and carried them off captive. Four of the friendly Kurds were wounded, and nothing is known of the fate of the Armenians.

The Kurds declare that they have permission to exterminate Christians, and Kurdish outrages are frequently reported in the district.

Mr. Boyajian adds that effectual and immediate action is necessary as the situation is grave, and the authorities are incapable of dealing with the existing evils.

The French and English Dragomans had, on the report of the French Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, already made representations at the Porte on the matter.

No. 211.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 48.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May* 21, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 184 of yesterday, reporting the outrages which are being committed by Kurds upon Christians in the Diarbekir Vilayet.

The state of disorder and fanaticism, uncontrolled by the Turkish authorities, which is indicated by the report from Diarbekir, might, at any moment, culminate in a grave crisis.

It is advisable that you should press the Sultan and the Porte most strongly to take measures at once for keeping in order the Kurds and other excited Mussulmans, and that you should in particular urge that the Sultan should, without waiting to discuss the details of the scheme of Armenian reforms, proceed with the appointment of a competent officer as High Commissioner, who should be furnished with full powers to enable him to adopt any provisional measures that may be necessary to insure peace and security.

Before making this representation, your Excellency should endeavour to obtain the co-operation of your French and Russian colleagues.

I will communicate on the subject with Her Majesty's Ambassadors at Paris and St. Petersburgh.

No. 212.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir F. Lascelles.[*]

(No. 86.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May* 21, 1895.

I HAVE repeated to your Excellency Sir P. Currie's telegram No. 184 of yesterday, and my telegram to him No. 48 of to-day, relative to the outrages which are being committed by Kurds upon Christians in the Diarbekir Vilayet.

I request that you will represent to the Government to which you are accredited the grave character of the situation as shown by the report from Diarbekir, and will urge them to instruct their Ambassador at Constantinople to join in the representations which Sir P. Currie has been directed to make. We may find ourselves in face of a serious crisis if proper measures are not speedily adopted for dealing with this state of affairs.

No. 213.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir E. Monson.[‖]

(No. 56. Confidential.)

Foreign Office, May 21, 1895.

Sir,

I TRANSMIT herewith, for your information, copies in duplicate of the scheme of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Asiatic Turkey, which has been

[*] Also to the Marquis of Dufferin (No. 61).

[‖] Also to Sir E. Malet (No. 152, Confidential), and Sir Clare Ford (No. 86, Confidential).

presented to the Sultan and the Porte by the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France, and Russia at Constantinople.

I understand that their Excellencies have already communicated the scheme to their Austrian, German, and Italian colleagues.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 214.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 203.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 21, 1895.*

IN the reports communicated to your Excellency by the Armenian Patriarch, and inclosed in your despatches Nos. 280 of the 30th ultimo and 313 of the 15th instant, it is stated that conversions to Islamism under compulsion by the Turkish authorities are of constant recurrence in the Vilayets of Sivas and Van, and that the prescribed formalities for enabling the Christian members of the Medjliss and the ecclesiastical authorities to make sure of the sincerity of the conversions are suppressed and neglected. The Vali of Van, on being appealed to, is said to have defended these arbitrary acts, on the ground that they were in conformity with Mussulman religious law.

The reports received from Her Majesty's Consuls give ground for apprehending that these statements are well founded.

It would be desirable that your Excellency should take some means of bringing these oppressive and violent proceedings to the attention of the Porte.

They are altogether opposed to the letter and spirit of the Hatti-Humayoun of 1856, which expressly declares that no one shall be hindered in the exercise of his religion, nor be compelled to change it; and they are strangely in contrast with the assertions contained in the Circular of the Porte of the 15th May, 1867, reviewing the effect of that measure since its promulgation, in which attention is specially called to the fact that not only is no Christian compelled to adopt Islamism, but that proselytizing on the part of Mussulmans is unknown in the Ottoman Empire.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 215.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 204.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 21, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 182 of the 18th instant, informing me of the joint communication made to the Porte by the Dragomans of the British, French, and Russian Embassies at Constantinople, urging the importance of orders being issued to insure the exclusion of nomad Kurds from the Sassoon villages during this year.

I have also received your despatch No. 322 of the 16th instant, inclosing copy of Mr. Consul Graves' despatch, in which attention was called to this important point.

The steps taken by your Excellency in this matter have the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 216.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 185.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 22, 1895.*

FRENCH and Russian Ambassadors and myself having asked our respective Delegates whether, now that the Commission was drawing to a close, they had considered the question of the joint Report they were to prepare, I have received the following reply from Mr. Shipley:—

"I do not think that on the main points of the inquiry there is any difference of opinion at all among us, but our Report will, I fear, take some little time to draw up, as, owing to the long daily sittings of the Commission, we have been unable to avoid falling into arrears with our later Protocols. Besides, owing to the fact of the Commission having followed no regular plan in its inquiries, it is impossible for us to discuss our final Report until the proceedings have been formally closed."

No. 217.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 186.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 22, 1895, 3·50 P.M.*

I HAVE received your Lordship's telegram No. 48, but before taking any action thereon I thought it best to send Mr. Block to see Said Pasha, to inquire whether he had taken any steps in consequence of the joint representations which he and the French Dragoman had made to his Excellency on the 19th instant.

Said Pasha informed him that it had been decided that Sirri Pasha, Governor-General of Diarbekir, who had come to Constantinople on leave, without any intention of returning, should be sent back to his post. Sirri Pasha, his Excellency added, was a tried and energetic man, who could be relied on to maintain order.

This statement is confirmed by the information in the possession of Her Majesty's Embassy.

I would therefore suggest that I should postpone for the present doing anything further with regard to the dispatch of a High Commissioner, as the Sultan's answer may shortly be expected. At the present moment, any such step on my part might have an unfavourable influence on the deliberations of His Imperial Majesty.

No. 218.

Sir E. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 22.)

(No. 58.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, May 22, 1895.*

I HAVE communicated to Prince Lobanoff the substance of Sir P. Currie's telegram and your Lordship's reply according to the instructions contained in your telegram No. 86.

His Excellency said he had received no news lately from Constantinople, but that the Minister of the Interior had informed him that there was great agitation among the Russian Armenians, who were purchasing arms, and who were in communication with Armenian Committees in London and other places. Their intention was to form a large Central Committee and Local Committees also in various places in Turkish territory, the object being to stir up a general insurrection.

Prince Lobanoff said that this information was causing him much embarrassment, and would probably entail a corresponding amount of activity on the part of the Russian police.

No. 219.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 49.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May* 22, 1895.

IN view of your Excellency's telegram No. 186 of to-day, reporting the steps about to be taken by the Porte for the maintenance of order in Diarbekir, I concur in your proposal to defer making representations to the Turkish Government with regard to the attitude of the Kurds towards the Christians in that vilayet.

No. 220.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 24.)

(No. 187.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 24, 1895, 7·55 P.M.

THE garden party which I gave this afternoon in honour of the Queen's birthday, was attended by the Armenian Patriarch, whose presence at such an entertainment was an unprecedented event and was intended to show his gratitude. His Beatitude expressed to me on behalf of his people and himself, cordial congratulations on Her Majesty's birthday and deep thankfulness for the interest taken in the welfare of the Armenians by Her Majesty.

No. 221.

The Marquis of Dufferin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 162.)
My Lord, *Paris, May* 23, 1895.

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram No. 61 of the 21st May, I yesterday communicated to M. Hanotaux the contents of your telegram No. 59, which repeated a telegram received from Diarbekir to the effect that some Armenian labourers of Sassoon had been captured by certain Kurds.

At the same time, I also communicated the substance of your Lordship's telegram No. 60, and represented to M. Hanotaux the desirability of immediate pressure being brought to bear upon the Porte by the three Powers, with a view to hastening the adoption of whatever measures might be best calculated to put an end to these dreadful occurrences.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND AVA.

No. 222.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 188.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 25, 1895, 11 A.M.

HER Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van telegraphs to me that some soldiers brought twelve armed men on 22nd May to Van from a place near the Turco-Persian frontier. They all arrived on foot, and were put into prison. Twelve are Armenians from the Province of Van, and one an Armenian from Russia. The last one, a young man, is the bearer of an English passport, made out in the name of Harry Williams, British subject, going to Russia, and dated 15th June, 1892. His passport has been *visé* at various Russian Consulates, including three times at the Russian Consulate in London in 1892, 1893, and on the 27th February of this year. It also bears the *visa* of the Russian Consul at Erivan, dated the 5th ultimo. The Vali told Mr. Hallward that, when captured, Williams was wearing Armenian dress, and showed him various things which were found on him, such as Armenian papers with political caricatures reflecting on Turkey, a rifle, a revolver, and a large supply of cartridges.

According to the Vali, Williams asserted that the remaining prisoners were in his pay.

The Vali has telegraphed to Constantinople, and is awaiting orders from the Government.

No. 223.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 189.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 25, 1895, 6·15 P.M.

I HAVE just received a visit from Munir Bey, who came to tell me that the Ministers had drawn up a counter-project of reforms, which was ready for presentation to-day. The Sultan, however, had rejected it, and had given orders that a new reply to our proposals should be drafted, to be communicated to us by the middle of next week.

Munir Bey, who professes to approve of the proposals of the three Powers, said that it was with the greatest pleasure that he was able to announce the rejection of the counter-proposals, and adding that he was convinced that the answer which would now be given would prove satisfactory to us. In reply to a question from Munir Bey as to whether I had expressed a wish to Said Pasha to examine the Sultan's proposals independently of my colleagues, I stated emphatically that I had expressed no such wish, and that I was working in entire accord with them.

I repeated to him the warning which I had addressed yesterday to the Grand Vizier and Said Pasha, that there could be no question of any concession on the part of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the principle of the reforms or the guarantees proposed, though matters of detail were open to discussion. I had already sent Mr. Block to the Palace to communicate the substance of this warning to the Chief Secretary for the information of the Sultan.

No. 224.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 190.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 25, 1895, 7 P.M.

MR. SHIPLEY telegraphs to me that the Commission is making difficulties about examining witnesses. They have declined to hear the Vicar Bishop of Genj, as they say that he has calumniated the Turkish troops, that he is a suspect, and has been expelled from his diocese by the Government, and that they cannot therefore regard his testimony as impartial.

The Bishop absolutely denies all these accusations, stating that he still exercises his religious office. He has been at Moush for two months, and the Delegates have only now, for the first time, heard of these objections to him, though his name has been frequently mentioned by them.

Mr. Shipley, therefore, concludes that the Commissioners are not desirous of taking his deposition solely because it is likely to prove distasteful to them.

With regard to the muleteers who accompanied the troops, and whom we have named, the Commission state that they have been informed by the Moush military authorities that no such persons ever accompanied the troops, that they cannot, therefore, inquire into the case, or comply with our request to summon them.

Further, with regard to Anna, the Commission state that they will not refuse to hear her on the proposal of the Delegates, but that they can attach no weight to the testimony of a woman who is the wife of Kirko, and they will refuse to examine her on the question of the surrender of the Armenians to the soldiers in camp.

The Delegates consider Anna an important witness, and her evidence could easily have been taken before this question of the surrender had been, as the Commission at last consider it, decided.

Of the four mule-drivers, whose names the Delegates submitted to the Commission, one accompanied them to Moush from Erzeroum, and another, Marchvo (?) by name, has stated in their presence that he was in camp at the time of the surrender.

No. 225.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 191.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 25, 1895, 11 P.M.

MR. BLOCK was sent for this evening by Saïd Pasha to the Palace, where a Council of Ministers was sitting.

His Excellency sent me, by the Sultan's orders, the following official message:—

"The reason why the answer to the proposals of the three Powers, which was promised for to-day, has been delayed, is that sufficient time had not been allowed for the Ministers to examine them.

"His Majesty hopes that the British Ambassador will not be uneasy on that account, as he may expect an answer by the middle of the week."

The project is now being examined by the Ministers, and their Report will be submitted without delay to the Sultan.

No. 226.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 326.)
My Lord, *Pera, May* 21, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to inform your Lordship that my French and Russian colleagues and I have received telegrams from the Consuls at Erzeroum relative to the necessity of obtaining from the Porte a promise of immunity for the witnesses who have given evidence before the Moush Commission after the departure of the European Delegates.

After consultation with my French and Russian colleagues we agreed to instruct our Dragomans to inform the Porte that we should consider the witnesses in question to be under our protection, and that careful lists of their names would be prepared by the Delegates, with such particulars as would secure their identification at any future time.

Directions in this sense have been telegraphed to the Delegates.

I inclose a copy of my instructions to Mr. Block, and I trust that your Lordship will approve my action in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

P.S.—I have also the honour to inclose copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Block reporting the representations he has made.

P. C.

Inclosure 1 in No. 226.

Memorandum for Mr. Block.

MR. BLOCK will inform the Porte jointly with his French and Russian colleagues that the three Ambassadors consider the witnesses who have given evidence before the Moush Commission as under their protection.

Careful lists of them will be made by the Delegates with such particulars as will enable them to be identified at any future time.

May 21, 1895.

Inclosure 2 in No. 226.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

IN the absence of the Foreign Minister at the Palace, and of the Under-Secretary, who is unwell, I communicated to the Secretary-General for Foreign Affairs on the 21st May that the three Ambassadors consider the witnesses who have given evidence before the Moush Commission as under their protection. M. Rouet, First Dragoman of the French Embassy, made the same communication, and we informed the Secretary-General that this was a joint representation by the three Embassies, and that M. Maximon would no doubt make the same on his arrival at the Porte.

Nouri Bey, Secretary-General, took a note of our communications for the immediate information of Saïd Pasha.

No. 227.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 327.)
My Lord, *Pera, May* 21, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, together with an extract from a private letter to me from the same gentleman, in regard to the complaint of Dr. Dillon, correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph" newspaper, of having been prevented by the Turkish authorities from passing over the frontier into Russia.

I do not propose to take any action in regard to Dr. Dillon's claim for damages unless instructed to do so by your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 227.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May* 11, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to report that Dr. Dillon, the special correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," left Erzeroum for the Russian frontier on his way to London on the morning of the 8th instant. I had officially requested the Governor-General in writing to provide him with the customary "Bonyouronldou," and an escort, and his Excellency had replied that no "Bonyouronldou" was necessary, but had provided a gendarme as escort.

Early this morning Dr. Dillon returned to Erzeroum, and informed me that he had been prevented from passing the frontier by the military authorities at Keutek, as he believed under direct orders from Constantinople. He has addressed the inclosed letters to me officially, stating the circumstances of his detention, and putting in a claim for 213*l.* 5*s.* as compensation for the expenses he had been put to, and for professional losses sustained.

Dr. Dillon made no telegraphic application to me for assistance during his delay of three to four hours at Keutek, but addressed a telegram to the Vali, to which his Excellency replied politely the same afternoon, stating that the military and frontier authorities had been instructed to allow him to pass freely into Russia; but Dr. Dillon, without awaiting the answer, had already started on his return journey to Erzeroum, as he declares that he could obtain no shelter at Keutek, and that the state of his health would not permit him to remain there longer under the circumstances.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 227.

Dr. Dillon to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Dzandzak, May* 9, 1895.

I BEG leave to draw your attention to the fact that I have been prevented by the authorities of Keutek, on the Turco-Russian frontier, from leaving Turkish territory, under the following circumstances:—

I left Erzeroum on the morning of Wednesday, the 8th May, with the knowledge of the local authorities, and escorted by a zaptieh appointed by his Excellency the Governor-General. Several days before starting I gave notice to the authorities not

only of my intention to return to London, but likewise of the route I proposed to take. This I did because I had been informed beforehand that difficulties would be thrown in the way of my leaving—a piece of information which I duly communicated to you at the time, and which you deemed unworthy of credence.

Before setting out on my journey I left nothing undone to fulfil all the required formalities. I requested you to demand my passport, which had remained in the hands of the authorities ever since my arrival at Erzeroum, and which they had always refused to give back to me. After having received this document from the Dragoman of the British Consulate, and had it duly *visé* by the Russian Consul-General, I started for Kars, accompanied by the zaptieh alluded to above.

On my arrival in Keutek I was at once asked by the officials at the Custom-house to show my passport, and almost before they had unfolded it they informed me that it would be their duty to prevent me from leaving Turkish territory. In reply to my request to be informed of the grounds of this prohibition, one of the officials stated that it was the result of an order of the Sublime Porte, another assured me that it was because the authorities at Erzeroum had neglected or forgotten to state on my passport that they had no objections to my departure, while a third, addressing his colleagues, suggested that as my passport was in order it would be best to allow me to leave the country unmolested.

I then pointed out the inconveniences that would result to me from any protracted delay, which seemed unwarranted under the circumstances, inasmuch as the presence of the zaptieh who had escorted me, and was then with me, constituted a sufficient guarantee that my departure from Erzeroum was known to and approved by the authorities of that city.

I further stated that I was unaware that a British subject needed any special permission to return to his country, the non-accordance of which would compel him to remain to all intents and purposes a prisoner. I emphasized the circumstance that I had expended a considerable sum of money in preparations for the journey, that at that very moment a carriage and four horses that I had ordered by telegram from Kars and two servants were awaiting me at Karaurgan, some 100 yards distant, on the Russian frontier. Lastly, I urged the very unsatisfactory state of my health as an additional reason for allowing me to cross over to Russia, adding that I had been travelling since 4 o'clock that morning, and needed repose, which could only be obtained by entering Russian territory, where a room had been prepared for my reception.

On this a messenger arrived, and requested me to cross over the stream to the military post, where the Colonel in command wished to see me. I followed the messenger and saw the Colonel surrounded by several other officers in a kind of garden. Addressing me now in Russian, now in French, in neither of which languages he could express himself very intelligibly—so that I frequently had to have recourse to my Armenian interpreter—he informed me that he could not permit me to leave Turkish territory. On my requesting him to make known to me his reason he replied, "You pretend that you have come from Erzeroum, yet you have no proof that your assertion is true. For all I know you may come from some other part of the Empire, and without the permission of the authorities, and until you can convince me by means of an official document embodying that permission, which you can receive only in Erzeroum—if, indeed, you come from that city—it will be my duty to hinder you from leaving Turkey." This statement appeared to me so important that I requested him to have the kindness to repeat it to my Armenian interpreter, which he very courteously did. Thereupon I directed his attention to the fact that his Excellency the Governor-General of Erzeroum had shown that he knew of my presence in and intended departure from Erzeroum by giving me a zaptieh at the formal request of the British Consul. The Colonel's reply to this was as follows: "The instructions under which I am acting cannot be made or unmade by a Governor-General, but only by the Sublime Porte."

I then announced my intention of informing, by telegraph, the British Ambassador of the prohibition, and requesting him to make representations to the Sublime Porte, which, judging by the somewhat confused but emphatic language of the Colonel in command, had given special instructions to have my journey impeded, and was alone competent to rescind the order. The Colonel strongly advised me to communicate with his Excellency the Governor-General of Erzeroum, explaining to him the results of any further delay, and announcing my intention to apply for compensation for my losses, material and other.

I at first refused to communicate directly with the Governor-General, alleging as a reason that if that dignitary had any power in the matter the proper person for me to communicate with would be the British Consul, but that as the prohibitive order had admittedly emanated from Constantinople, I should bring the matter to the notice of the British Ambassador there.

The Colonel in command, however, repeatedly urged me to send a telegraphic communication to the Governor-General, promising me a reply within half-an-hour which would make it clear whether I must return to Erzeroum or not.

At last I consented, and wrote the following telegram in French:—

"A son Excellence le Gouverneur-Général d'Erzeroum,

"J'ai l'honneur d'informer votre Excellence que le Commandant Militaire de Keutek a cru devoir me défendre de passer la frontière pour rentrer en Russie, de sorte que je suis obligé de rentrer à Erzeroum. Comme cette mesure m'occasionnera des pertes considérables, pour ne pas parler de l'effet sur ma santé, je lui ai fait part de mon intention d'en demander le remboursement au Gouvernement Impérial.—DILLON."

The official in charge of the telegraph office at Keutek refused to accept this or any other message in any language but Turkish, whereupon it was translated for him by my Armenian interpreter, who understands but does not write or read Turkish.

The telegraph official, who refused to allow any one else to draw up the message, then wrote it down, announcing that he must alter it in the process, and then requesting me to affix my signature in French or English. This I persistently refused to do, and a telegram was forwarded the terms of which are unknown to me. Fifteen minutes later a reply was verbally communicated to me in the presence of three witnesses to the effect that the Governor-General was at his prayers and could not attend to my telegram. After the lapse of two hours and-a-half more, no answer being received, my coachman informed me that unless I wished to pass the night in the open air, there being no accommodation at Keutek, I must return to the nearest village, Dzandzak, which is five hours distant.

Between 4 and 5 o'clock P.M. I returned to Dzandzak, where I shall pass the night in an underground hut, in spite of my ill-health, after having been wet through by the storm. I remained in Keutek from 12·35 to 4·25 P.M.

I hereby request that you will bring these facts to the notice of the British Ambassador, and ask that due compensation may be awarded me.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. J. DILLON.

Inclosure 3 in No. 227.

Dr. Dillon to Consul Graves.

Dzandzak (Russia), May 10, 1895.

Sir,

I BEG leave to communicate the following facts, as supplementing the statement already made.

This morning, as I lay ill on a wooden couch in the underground hut in which I had passed the night, two messengers arrived from Keutek, the one a soldier, the other a civilian. They brought me a verbal message from the Consul of Turkey at Kars to the effect that that gentleman requested me to come to Keutek, where he would be pleased to wait for and with me. They also said that the Colonel in command at Keutek, who had refused me permission to cross the frontier, would feel much obliged if I would remain in Dzandzak until further orders. I replied that I was too ill to prolong my stay in such an anti-hygienic place as Dzandzak, and must continue my journey to Erzeroum unless and until I had express permission to proceed. The messengers likewise brought me the visiting card of the Turkish Consul in Kars, with the following lines:—

"Daniel Saïb Bey, Colonel d'État-Major, Consul de Turquie, a l'honneur de vous prier de venir à Keutek pour se [*sic*] rendre en Russie," to which I forwarded the following reply:—

"Mr. E. T. Dillon a l'honneur de présenter ses salutations cordiales à M. Daniel Saïb Bey et regrette qu'il ne peut accepter son invitation de retourner à Keutek, non-seulement par raison de sa santé, qui a souffert par le double voyage d'hier, mais aussi parce que la prohibition de quitter le territoire Ottoman fut prononcée publique-

ment et solennellement par le Commandant Militaire agissent, comme il disait, d'après des instructions reçues de Constantinople et non par le Consul Turc à Kars. En outre, Mr. Dillon a déjà essuyé des pertes considérables par suite du délai, qu'il espère voir remboursées par le Gouvernement Ottoman. Tout bien pesé, donc, Mr. Dillon regrette de ne pouvoir se rendre à Keutek."

STATEMENT of Claims for Compensation.

	£	s.	d.
Journey to Keutek from Erzeroum and back	22	0	0
Money spent in telegrams and messenger in connection with my detention at Keutek	11	5	0
Four horses and one servant ordered from Kars, and which still await me in Kurougan, at the rate of 3*l.* a-day	30	0	0
Breaking off my engagements in Vienna and London, and consequent pecuniary loss	150	0	0
Total	213	5	0

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. J. DILLON.

Inclosure 4 in No. 227.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Private.)
(Extract.) *Erzeroum, May* 11, 1895.

I AM sending on a despatch with a long account given by Dr. Dillon of his having, as he says, been prevented from crossing the frontier into Russia. From his own account even I do not see that he has a very great grievance.

Personally, I am sorry he has returned, as he is an unpleasant sort of person, and a mischief-maker. An Irish Catholic, of Jesuit Seminary education, and eighteen years' residence in Russia, who is also a "Daily Telegraph" man, is not likely to shine by his candour; but he seems to me to be a liar of almost phenomenal capacity. If he had waited a couple of hours longer he would have been allowed to pass the frontier; but it is quite clear to me that he wanted to take advantage of the smallest difficulty as an excuse for coming back. What his motives were I cannot say for certain; perhaps he had professional reasons for wanting to come back; perhaps there was a private attraction in Erzeroum; and perhaps he saw his way to an "adventure" of which he proposed to make a fine story for the "Daily Telegraph."

Though I have been civil and hospitable to him, I take care to be much on my guard, especially as I understand that he carries to my Russian colleague tales of what he pretends to have heard at my table, &c.

I got a telegram from the Foreign Office this morning, which I am just going to answer, asking what has become of Dillon. Owing to their not understanding the old style date on his telegram, his people apparently think that he has disappeared for fourteen days, whereas he has only been three days away from Erzeroum.

No. 228.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 328.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 22, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copies of despatches which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, and from Her Majesty's Consul at Damascus, in regard to the relations between Christians and Moslems in those places.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 228.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, May* 11, 1895.

WITH reference to the accompanying Report of Mr. Eyres, received under flying seal, on the relations between Mussulmans and Christians at Damascus, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that the agitation against Christians in the town of Beyrout has subsided considerably since I had the honour of addressing your Excellency on the subject in my despatch of the 12th ultimo.

This improved state of affairs has been brought about by more energetic action on the part of the Vali, in obedience, I believe, to instructions he had lately received from the Sublime Porte. It is stated that he summoned the Mahommedan Notables of this city and warned them that they would be held responsible and severely punished in case of any disturbance of the public peace by their co-religionists.

I have not received fresh reports from Lattakia and Sidon, and must therefore conclude that the agitations in these districts have not assumed more serious form.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 228.

Consul Eyres to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Damascus, May* 6, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to report, for your Excellency's information, that during some months after the receipt of the news of the troubles in Armenia a feeling of disquietude pervaded alike Moslems and Christians in this city. Vague rumours with regard to the general insecurity were spread about, which resulted principally in a sensible diminution in the number of tourists during the spring. These rumours were ascribed to various sources, but I think they may be put down to the fact which has always been observed in this country, that disturbances in one district produce a ripple of agitation throughout the Empire. The fanaticism of the lower class of Moslems is easily aroused, and as a consequence there follows a great deal of irresponsible bazaar chatter with regard to the advisability of strengthening the hands of their co-religionists by effecting an imitation of what has occurred elsewhere.

For my part I was inclined to believe that there was no real basis for the disquietude which existed, but lately I received information from a Moslem source, to which I cannot but give some credence, to the effect that secret meetings were held by the Mahommedans to discuss the question whether it was desirable to proceed to a massacre of the Christians or not. The older men, who remembered the events of 1860 and their consequences, were utterly opposed to any such course, and were able to restrain the impetuosity of the younger Moslems, and to put a stop to the whole proceeding. The occurrence bears out the opinion which I have always heard expressed, that a massacre of Christians is impossible, except when brought about by the orders or the connivance of the Ottoman Government.

At the present time this province is quite tranquil as regards the relations between Moslems and Christians, though anarchy reigns in the districts inhabited by the Druses, on which matter I am about to report further to your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. C. A. EYRES.

No. 229.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 329.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 22, 1895.

WITH reference to the concluding portion of Mr. Graves' despatch No. 79, forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 322 of the 16th May, I have received telegraphic communications from the British Delegate at Moush respecting the state of destitution and despair to which the sufferers from the Sassoon events of last year are being reduced.

Mr. Shipley reports that he has learnt from the Vartabed of Arabel Convent, near Moush, who, he has reason to believe, enjoys the confidence of the Armenians, that sufferers from recent events are beginning to talk of doing something desperate in order to procure for themselves a livelihood. They say that they are driven out from every place, and that it is better to be killed at once than to perish slowly of want.

The Vartabed has strongly dissuaded those with whom he has been able to hold communication from any rash step, but he says that the misery is great, and that something must be done or the consequences may be serious.

Mr. Shipley also reports that none of the money sent by the Sultan for the relief of the Sassoontis has yet been distributed, and he gathers that the Government has been endeavouring to use the money in order to persuade the people to sign a statement saying that the depositions made by their Headmen before the Commission were false. The people, however, have refused to sign such a statement, and are preparing a Petition to the Commission setting forth the facts of the case.

Mr. Shipley, moreover, is informed that the authorities are anxious to induce the villagers to repudiate the former Councils of Elders as being suspected persons.

Mr. Shipley concludes from these considerations that it would be for the interest of the Armenians themselves that the inquiry should be closed as soon as possible, as the question of affording real relief to the sufferers could then be taken up without raising any suspicions of undue influence on either side.

I have instructed Mr. Block to mention the substance of the above to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, omitting any portions that would compromise the informants.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 230.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 330.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, May 22, 1895.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 168 of the 15th April of last year, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, inclosing copy and translation of a placard posted up at Sivas, expressing dissatisfaction with the existing Turkish régime.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 230.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, May 15, 1895.

Sir,

IN January 1893, in March 1894, and now in May 1895, Turkish placards against the Government were posted up at Sivas.

Copy and translation of one of the last are herewith annexed. It has the appearance of caligraphy reproduced by a hectograph, and, in sending it to me, Dr. Jewett remarks that a large number of them were seen all over the town on the morning of the 6th instant. It is the work, he thinks, of the same Turks and Armenians who were suspected to be the authors of the placards of the 28th March, 1894, reported at the time in despatch of the 9th April.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

Inclosure 2 in No. 230.

Proclamation and Invitation.

Dear Compatriots,

OUR beloved country, the Ottoman Empire, is administratively and politically in distress, and our people are encountering daily poverty and injustice. The chief cause is the depraved and corrupt officials of our unjust Government—this band of brigands who, by all kinds of abuses, sacrifice to selfishness public rights and interests, robbing our

people, the Treasury, and the Empire, preparing the shroud and digging, with pickaxes in hand, the grave of our country. It is as clear as the light of the sun that our Government and its officials are endeavouring hard to ruin our country and our Empire. Against these wrongs from which our Mussulman compatriots are suffering the Armenians are complaining loudly, while the Government, interpreting otherwise their conduct, are sowing discord and enmity between the two people. It is chiefly our Vali, Khalil Bey, who, by his characteristic intrigues, has thus subverted the vilayet, and destroyed public tranquillity. Now, O fellow countrymen! in the name of downtrodden justice and public rights, let us set aside coldness and hatred, and, stretching out a hand to each other, let us throw off the heavy yoke and burden of an unjust Government by raising on high the standard of liberty.

May God punish and destroy the enemies of justice. Amen.

(Patriotic Committee.)

No. 231.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 132. Confidential.)
My Lord,

St. Petersburgh, May 22, 1895.

I CALLED upon Prince Lobanoff this afternoon to communicate to him Sir Philip Currie's telegram of the 20th instant, and your Lordship's reply of yesterday, on the subject of the state of disorder and fanaticism which existed in Armenia.

As soon as I mentioned Armenia, his Excellency said that he had received information from the Minister of the Interior of the existence of great agitation among the Armenians in Russia, who were purchasing arms, and were in communication with the Armenian Committees in London and elsewhere. They had proclaimed the intention of forming a large central Committee, with smaller local Committees in different districts in Turkey, for the purpose of stirring up a general insurrection in Turkey.

Prince Lobanoff was unable to say where it was proposed to form the large central Committee, whether on Turkish or Russian territory, or elsewhere, but it was evident that the Russian authorities would be compelled to take measures ("des mesures de police") to prevent their subjects from stirring up an insurrection in a neighbouring country. He had communicated this information to the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, and he said that it caused him considerable embarrassment, not that he wished to attach undue political importance to it, but it was impossible not to take it into consideration, in view of the reports of further outrages being committed in the Armenian provinces.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 232.

The Marquis of Dufferin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 166.)
My Lord,

Paris, May 26, 1895.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 55 of the 16th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith copy of a note which I have received from M. Hanotaux, in which his Excellency states that he has no objection to the proposed communication to the Austrian, German, and Italian Governments of the project of reforms for the provinces of Armenia, which has been already submitted to the Porte.

His Excellency goes on to make a suggestion as to the best means of making the communication in question.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND AVA.

Inclosure in No. 232.

M. Hanotaux to the Marquis of Dufferin.

Paris, le 24 Mai, 1895.

M. l'Ambassadeur,

VOUS avez bien voulu, sous la date du 17 de ce mois, m'aviser, sur l'ordre de votre Gouvernement, que, si les Gouvernements Français et Russe n'y avaient aucune objection, le Cabinet de Londres se proposerait de communiquer confidentiellement aux Gouvernements Austro-Hongrois, Allemand, et Italien, le projet de réformes pour les provinces Arméniennes qui a déjà été soumis à la Porte.

Je ne vois actuellement, en ce qui me concerne, aucun inconvénient à ce que les Gouvernements précités reçoivent le texte du projet dont il s'agit. Quant à la forme sous laquelle pourrait être faite cette communication, il me paraît que pour tenir compte des précédents de la question, la meilleure procédure à adopter consisterait à inviter les trois Ambassadeurs, auteurs du projet, à se concerter pour déterminer les conditions dans lesquelles ils en feraient connaître la teneur à leurs collègues Austro-Hongrois, Allemand, et Italien.

Dans le cas où le Gouvernement de la Reine accepterait cette suggestion, je serais disposé à adresser des instructions en conséquence à votre Ambassadeur à Constantinople.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) HANOTAUX.

No. 233.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 27.)

(No. 192.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 27*, 1895, 8·30 p.m.

WITH reference to my telegram to your Lordship No. 190 of the 25th instant, we have instructed the Delegates to insist on the examination of the witnesses in question, and should the Commission still refuse to hear them, they are to examine them themselves separately, informing the Commissioners that they have received instructions to do so from their respective Ambassadors.

We shall inform the Porte of the dispatch of these instructions.

No. 234.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 51.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 27*, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 190 of the 25th instant relative to the action of the Sassoon Commissioners in refusing to take the evidence of certain important witnesses suggested to them by the foreign Delegates.

I presume that you are consulting with your French and Russian colleagues as to this refusal. It is contrary to the understanding on which the Delegates were appointed, and cannot, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, be admitted.

The Report of the Commission will be deprived of all value if the Commissioners persist in such proceedings.

No. 235.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 52.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 27*, 1895.

THE reports contained in your Excellency's telegrams Nos. 189 and 191 of the 25th instant do not inspire us with any confidence as to the intentions of the Sultan in regard to the scheme of Armenian reforms presented by the Ambassadors.

You should suggest to your Russian and French colleagues that, if no answer is received from the Turkish Government by the 30th instant, a joint communication should be made by you insisting on a categorical reply before the 1st June, and stating

that the main provisions of the scheme of reforms are the minimum of what could be accepted as adequate by the three Governments.

Your Excellency should endeavour also to arrive at some agreement with your two colleagues as to the manner in which pressure should be exercised in the event of the answer not being favourable, for in that case it will be necessary to employ pressure, either joint or separate.

The first point, however, is that a date for the answer should be fixed.

The feeling in this country is becoming more acute every day.

No. 236.

Foreign Office to Evangelical Alliance.

Foreign Office, May 27, 1895.

Sir,

THE Earl of Kimberley has consulted Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople as to the wish of the Evangelical Alliance, expressed in your letter of the 19th ultimo, to communicate to certain of its Committees abroad the Memorandum on the subject of religious liberty in Turkey, furnished to his Excellency by Mr. Dwight in his letter of the 12th February last.

I am directed by his Lordship to inform you that a despatch has been received from Sir P. Currie, stating that he sees no objection to the proposal of the Society. I am to add that Lord Kimberley concurs with Sir P. Currie.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 237.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 136. Confidential.)
St. Petersburgh, May 24, 1895.

My Lord,

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram No. 90 of the 22nd instant, I informed Prince Lobanoff yesterday that your Lordship concurred in Sir P. Currie's suggestion to postpone until the end of the week any further communication to the Porte with regard to the immediate appointment of a High Commissioner to carry out the proposed reforms in Armenia.

Prince Lobanoff, in thanking me for this communication, said that he had heard from the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople that the Sultan did not seem indisposed to consent to the scheme of reforms, and had only so far raised objections to two points, one of which was that the appointment of the Valis should last for five years, and the other some point about the army, which was evidently the consequence of a misunderstanding.

His Excellency said that he anticipated that the Sultan would have raised much more serious objection to the scheme of reforms, more especially as to the extent of territory which would be affected by them.

On my referring to the information which he had communicated to me on the previous day with regard to the possibility of a general insurrection among the Armenians, Prince Lobanoff said that he felt considerable anxiety on the subject, as I could easily understand that a general rising of the Armenians would be most distasteful to the Russian Government, and might lead to serious complications.

Prince Lobanoff added that he had heard from Paris that the French Government had no objection to raise to your Lordship's proposal that the scheme of reforms should be communicated to the German, Austro-Hungarian, and Italian Governments, but that M. Hanotaux considered that the best course to adopt would be that the Ambassadors of England, France, and Russia, who had elaborated the scheme, should communicate it to their colleagues of Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Italy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 238.

The Archbishop of Canterbury to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 28.)

Lambeth Palace, London, May 27, 1895.

My Lord.

IN forwarding the accompanying extract of a letter from the Rev. A. R. Edington, a member of the Mission to the Assyrian Christians in Western Persia and Turkish Kurdistan, I am under the impression that, independently of its bearing upon the particular community in whose welfare I am immediately concerned, some of the information which it contains may be useful in connection with the question of administrative reform in Turkish Armenia.

Should the reports published in the daily press be correct, there are six vilayets in which it is proposed that "the Governors and Vice-Governors shall be Mussulmans or Christians, according as the relative numbers of the Christian population may seem to require."

These are given as Van, Erzeroum, Sivas, Bitlis, Kharput, and Trebizond. Now the vilayet or district of Van is subdivided into two sandjaks, or minor districts, Van and Hakkiari, and according to the most recent works on Asiatic Turkey the latter is inhabited by 92,000 Assyrian Christians, of whom 40,000 are classed as Nestorians, and 52,000 as autonomous, exclusive of some 80,000 Armenians. The number is probably somewhat exaggerated, but however that may be, I would express the hope that the Assyrians will be admitted to the same benefits as their Armenian brethren from the reforms introduced.

The question of area referred to in your Lordship's letter would, it is presumed, be provided for in such case by accepting the recognized limits of the sandjak.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDW. CANTUAR.

Inclosure in No. 238.

The Rev. A. Edington to the Assyrian Mission.

Lambeth Palace, London, April 20, 1895.

(Extract.)

IT has been reported to me that two Turkish officers in Bashkala were overheard discussing the question of driving out Christians and putting Circassians in their place. Again, a servant of Mar Shimun's affirms that he was speaking to the Vali of Van on the subject of Christian oppressions, and of the way in which the Christians were continually being forced to give up their houses and lands, and to seek refuge in more secure places, and on the question being put to the Vali as to the wisdom of this from the Turkish Government's standpoint, the Vali is reported to have said that it made no difference, as thousands of Circassians were ready to take their places.

There is, further, no doubt that a scheme is on foot to place Circassians in a plain east of the Plain of Gawar and Nochea. In former times this plain was occupied by Syrian Christians, and the church there (and it is now in complete ruins) bears witness to this, but it is reported that Circassians will be brought to that district this spring.

The Circassians are not given to plundering the Christians like the Kurds, and so their being neighbours of the Christians is not the hardship; but the hardship is that the Christians, by one kind of oppression or another, are compelled to leave their homes, the Turks knowing that they can easily put Circassians in to prevent the land from going out of cultivation (although the Turk is surprisingly careless in this matter, notwithstanding, for his own sake, one would expect him to be otherwise.

About the depopulation of villages.

The cases of the Christian village of Mar Bishu and the neighbouring one of Iyus are good typical ones. These two villages are situated in Turkey, not far from the Persian frontier, and for this reason they are continually in danger of being plundered by Kurdish robbers, who carry the sheep and other plunder into Persia, where little or nothing can be done in the matter except by an appeal through the Turkish Vice-Consul in Urmi (Shabundar) to the Turkish Consul-General in Tabriz. Such an appeal is never entirely successful, and is always extremely expensive and protracted. I have known of plunder being partly restored, but only partly, and after almost infinite trouble and delay. The Kurdish raids have made these villages very poor, but, instead of obtaining help or protection from the Turkish Government, they receive only the reverse. The tax collectors come and demand taxes in full, not only for each head of sheep that the villagers have, but also they insist on counting those which have, partly through the apathy of the Government, been stolen, and this they continue to do for three or four years after the sheep have been stolen. The collectors also enter in their books that a man has fifty sheep instead of twenty-five, and make him pay on the false larger number. They further demand from the residents the taxes of those who have long since left the village, and taxes which have been duly paid are demanded over and over again, under the excuse, true enough in word, that no entry of it can be found in their books, although the Christians have Government receipts for the same. It is quite true that no entry of such payments can frequently be found in the collectors' books, for they have put it into their own pockets, and not into the Government chest.

The tax collectors always demand very good presents for themselves, and the Christians are afraid to refuse them, for fear of being more badly treated.

It is evident that the entire depopulation of these villages is only a question of time. One chief reason that prevents it is that the Christians are unwilling to leave their churches without guardians there.

This is simply one example of the way in which the Turks compel the Christians to leave their homes, but the Turks do not seem to care, for they have other people, *e.g.*, the Circassians and Kurds, to take the places vacated by the Christians.

No. 239.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 193.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 28, 1895, 11 A.M.*

MY telegram No. 188 of the 25th May.

Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van telegraphs that the young man with an English passport gives his father's name as Willard Williams, of 22, Ormiston Road, Shepherd's Bush, London, and says that he is travelling as correspondent for the Central News Telegraphic Agency.

No. 240.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 194. Confidential.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 28, 1895.*

I HAVE spoken to my French and Russian colleagues with reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 52 of yesterday's date.

We have agreed that our Dragomans should go to the Porte to-morrow and state that the three Ambassadors have taken act of the Sultan's promise that they should have his answer by the middle of the week, and that it must be received to-morrow evening, or on Thursday at the latest.

If we do not receive the answer by Thursday, the question of the further joint communication will then be considered.

The French and Russian Ambassadors promised to make urgent representations at the Palace, in the sense of the message, to be delivered to the Porte, and against any modification of the main points of the scheme.

Neither of my colleagues was prepared to express any opinion as to the manner in which it might be possible to apply pressure at the Porte, but their idea seems to be that in the event of Turkey rejecting the proposals, they would withdraw from any further action, and would tell the Sultan that he would then have to settle the question with England alone, and that we should no doubt demand a Conference of the Powers.

In reply to some observations to this effect from M. Cambon, I pointed out that Her Majesty's Government had never committed themselves to any such plan of action.

I said that though my Government had not communicated with me on the subject, it seemed more probable that if left to deal with the question alone, they would take some decisive action to force Turkey to accept the reforms than pledge themselves to a proposal which all the Powers might not be willing to accept.

No. 241.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 28.)

(No. 195.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 28, 1895, 8·20 P.M.*

I HAVE made representations at the Porte respecting the Englishman Williams, mentioned in my telegram No. 193 of to-day's date.

They had received a telegram from Van informing them of the arrest of fourteen revolutionary Armenians who had crossed over into Turkey from Persia, but the telegram made no mention of an Englishman being captured.

No. 242.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 53.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 28, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 192 of yesterday relative to the examination of witnesses by the Sassoon Commission.

Your action is entirely approved by Her Majesty's Government.

No. 243.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 265.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 28, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 300 of the 13th instant relative to various cases of abduction of Christian girls by Moslems in the Province of Van.

Your Excellency should call the most serious attention of the Porte to the reports of these proceedings contained in Mr. Vice-Consul Hallward's despatches.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 244.

Mr. F. S. Stevenson, M.P., to Foreign Office.—(Received May 29.)

(Private.) 233, *Cromwell Mansions, Cromwell Road, London, May 28, 1895.*

Dear Grey,

I HEREWITH inclose, for the information of the Foreign Office, copies of three documents recently received by the Rev. E. D. Greene. The first, containing "Facts and Figures from the Province of Van," is by the Rev. H. M. Allen, of Van. The second, called a "Letter from Armenia," is by Miss Mary Ely, of Bitlis.* The third is by Dr. H. N. Barnum, of Harpoot. They are all American missionaries. Their names should on no account be made public.

Yours very truly,
(Signed) F. S. STEVENSON.

Inclosure 1 in No. 244.

Facts and Figures from the Province of Van.

THE prevailing conditions in the Province of Van make it difficult for the student of current events to secure all the verified data he would wish, but in spite of this the writer has been fortunate in being able to secure a large amount of information from direct and reliable sources. The following facts and figures have been selected from a large store as best presenting the general situation.

The Governor of Van is a Ferik (Marshal of the Army) Pasha, Bahri by name.

* Already printed [illegible] in No. 110.

His distinguishing characteristics are imperiousness, credulity, ignorance, and hatred of the Christians. It is absolutely certain that after three years of most ruinous rule he has secured the cordial hatred of Moslems and Christians alike, excepting possibly the criminals among the former, who go unmolested by him. Whatever may have been the former condition of the province, this certainly is true, that his short service has brought the province to the very verge of financial and moral ruin. A careful student told the writer that this Governor is responsible, directly or indirectly, for the deaths of 1,000 Christians, and for the emigration of 5,000 more, and it ought to be added that the indications are that this statement is not far from correct. He has never punished a Kurd for theft, or even murder. On the contrary, he is known to be the friend of the most notorious cut-throats in the region. He was seen only this summer, in the Bashkala region, to decorate some of them on the forehead, as a mark of his special favour. Let the following instance suffice to illustrate his dealings with Kurds: Shadakh district, to the south of Van, claims the distinction of sheltering the most noted brigand of the region. His name is Shekir. On the 14th June, 1893, he added to his long list of crimes the murder of four helpless Armenians. Since the deed was done at the instigation of the Government (of which unquestionable proof exists), Shekir was of course not arrested. As a matter of fact, he has been in outlaw for some time, and yet has always been on the most friendly terms with the Government. Last summer the Vali, making his usual tour, visited Shadakh. He called Shekir and the friends of the four Armenians who had been murdered, and said to the latter, "Look here, you must forgive Shekir for killing your friends, and I will see that he pays you some money." Needless to say, the forgiveness was forthcoming, and they received a small sum of money, which Shekir simply took from some of his other vassals and handed over to them.

One way in which he has impoverished the province has been in sending enormous sums of money, taken from the revenue, to his military chief in Erzingan. As a result there is a widespread depression of business of all kinds, and the salaries of officials have been in arrears for seven or eight months. Owing to this a Turkish army doctor became so depressed that he shot and killed himself a few weeks ago, leaving a document in which he laid the blame at the door of the Government.

The following instance will illustrate Bahri Pasha's method of removing obstacles. The official next to himself in rank, the Treasurer of the province, was a man of unusually fine traits, and was unwilling to have a hand in crooked transactions, and, as a result, he incurred his Excellency's displeasure. One day he found himself ejected from the Government building by the order of the Vali. In the meantime, the Vali commanded the members of the municipal body to prepare a paper to the effect that the said Treasurer had, at a certain meeting of this assembly, taken the Vali by the throat. The paper was prepared, signed by all the members, and sent on to Constantinople. The result was a despatch recalling the Treasurer.

It must be added that the Vali is not alone in his destructive policy. His right-hand man, whose fiendishness is simply inconceivable, is Nouri, the First Commissioner of Police. If the history of the life of this man during the last three years could be written, it would horrify the Christian world beyond measure. There are two other men who ought to be mentioned, the Attorney-General and the President of the Court (Mouda-i-Mouni and Istinat Reis), who stand hand in hand with the Vali in bringing ruin upon the Armenians as fast as possible, but their course will be better shown under the next head.

Courts of Justice.—In reciting the following signal instances, there will be the effort to show that the Courts of Van are places where, under a legal name, the most shameless and heartless injustice is perpetrated on the persons and communities of Armenian Christians.

Case 1.—In the month of May 1892 a brawl took place on a Saturday night between some Kurds and Turks on the outskirts of Van Gardens. One of the Kurds was killed on the spot; another fatally wounded, but managed to drag himself further on to a village a mile away, called Sukhkyar, where in the early morning he was found by the villagers in a dying condition. He confessed to the Turkish Moolah that they had been attacked just at the edge of the gardens. By the time the police arrived the man was dead. His two remaining companions, however, put in an appearance, and on being questioned by the police, corroborated the statement that their party had been attacked within the city limits. A bloody sword was taken from one of these Kurds, but they were both allowed to go free, while the Armenian village was surrounded by gendarmes, and finally thirteen representative young men were marched off to prison. For five months they remained in prison, and were occasionally called to answer questions at the Court of First Instance. They were then released; but the whole village was soon

summoned, and the President of the Court read a Decree, which had been returned from Constantinople, to the effect that, as the murderers of these two Kurds had not been found, Moslem law required that the village within whose limits the murder had been committed should pay blood-money, which in this case would be 640 liras, payable in three years.

That is to say, if the Government has its way, these poor villagers must either pay that sum before next November, or be turned out of house and home. The latter result is inevitable. It remains to note the points of procedure, and to judge of their legality. (1.) Whereas the laws of this country demand that no case can be referred to the Religious Court till it has been through the Civil Courts and the guilty party convicted, the case in question did not go beyond the Court of First Instance, that it was never tried in any Court, but was simply referred to the Religious Court in Constantinople, which returned a Decree of blood-money payable by the Christians in Sukhkyar to the relatives of the murdered men. (2.) While no evidence was ever brought against the village, the surviving companions of the murdered were never summoned to give their evidence. (3.) The Penal Code, Article 171, provides for the penalty of blood-money in case the murderer is known. Outside of this Penal Code, strict Moslem law—not applicable to Christians at least—provides that, if the Civil Courts fail by every means to detect the murderer, then blood-money may be levied on the city or village where the murder took place. Even supposing the latter to be a legal proceeding, in this case, as the Civil Court did nothing whatever to detect the murderer, the order could not be even legally referred to the Religious Court. (4.) In any case, the villagers of Sukhkyar could not be held responsible, as the murder did not take place within their limits, but in the city limits. And now to put the whole matter in the true light. The Turks covet this well-watered and finely-situated village, and want to secure it by means fair or foul; and certainly in this case they have simply made a mockery of their own laws in order to accomplish this end.

Case 2.—Parallel with the above, and originating in the determination of the Turks to possess themselves of the best, is the case of the Armenian village of Shah-baghi, 2 miles to the north of the city, and in every way exceedingly desirable. Some time ago a low-down Moslem played successfully the rôle of a wonder-working servant of Allah, became a Sheikh, and received honours generally. It was found that his father had owned a few scattered pieces of land within Shah-baghi limits. A wily Turk of Van, known as Hassan Pasha, who has a brother in high office in Constantinople, conceived the idea of building a mosque in this village, and a summer residence besides for himself, and so instigated the Sheikh to start a claim on the lands of Shah-baghi as an old inheritance handed down from his ancestors. The case was taken up, to the surprise and consternation of the villagers. No case was ever clearer, as vindicating the rights of the villagers, since they were able to produce deeds dating back through several generations; but even these documents, issued by the Government itself, proved unavailing, and recently a Decree came from Constantinople empowering the Sheikh to take possession.

Case 3.—Last year a Turk, from the large village of Artemid, went out for a day's shooting. He did not return at night, and was found later with a bullet through his thigh. His gun was a double-barrelled one, and one barrel was found empty. The bullet which killed him was extracted, and seen to be exactly like those in his pouch. The examination made the case so clear that the Court gave a verdict of self-inflicted death. Some time after this the Government itself stirred up the friends of the man to raise the cry of murder and blood-money. In a word, this was done, and the local Court, without any proof whatever, reversed its former decision, and decreed that blood-money should be levied, but only on the Christians, who, in this village, are outnumbered by 350 families.

Case 4.—The following will show how any disorder or crime occurring in the province is invariably laid to the Christians:—

Last year, in the large village of Sludakh, thirteen hours to the south of the city, where a Sub-Governor and a few soldiers are stationed, there was a Turkish Captain who was well known as friendly to the Christians, who had a paramour in the house of a certain Kurd. His attentions and visits were not favourably regarded by the other members of the household. One night he was seen to enter the house, but never came out alive. Some days after his body was found in the river. The crime was at once laid to the Armenians, whereas not even circumstantial evidence existed against them. A large number of them were thrown into prison, and several of them have since died of ill-treatment.

Case 5.—Three miles from the city is the village of Kurubash. In the summer of 1893 four men, with four girls, were gathering herbs on the hillside, and were suddenly

attacked by a party of armed Kurds. The men were killed, and the girls violated. Then the Kurds cut off the ears of their dead victims and rode away. The next day, in spite of the opposition of soldiers, the unhappy villagers brought their mangled dead, with the four weeping widows, and, after passing in front of the three Consulates (British, Russian, and Persian), halted at last in front of the Governor's house. He put his head out of the window, looking for a moment at the heartrending sight, and said, "Too bad, I will do what I can for you." The perpetrators of the crime, having no fear of consequences, were not far away, and were easily arrested. The girls who had been violated identified them one by one, and what was the result? Certain Satanic advisers approached his Excellency and persuaded him that this whole thing was a plot on the part of the Armenians, and that the outrage itself was committed by Armenians in order to convince the Porte that the Province of Van was badly governed. The shot struck home through his amazing credulity, and for a season a veritable reign of terror existed. Arrests of Armenians followed. To-day there are in the local prison ten Armenians accused of having a part in these murders, and under sentence.

Case 6.—Soon after the present Governor arrived he was being driven along the main street one day, when a drunken Armenian was seen riding a horse back and forth on a mad gallop, as is often done in the East on festive occasions. Under the circumstances, the Vali was naturally annoyed, and gave orders to have the man arrested. After arrest and a sound beating the man lay in a drunken stupor, and on examination there was found on his person a broken revolver, which could not possibly have done any harm. This proved the opportunity for which some were evidently waiting. They succeeded in convincing the Vali that there had been a dire plot against his life, and that he had barely escaped assassination. The next thing was to force the poor Armenian (an ignorant villager from Averig) to name certain well-known Armenians, against whom the Governor had a grudge, as the ones who had hired him to assassinate the Vali. The man agreed to say this on condition that he be released. The promise was made, but when the desired testimony was given, and he still remained a prisoner, he blurted out the whole story of how he had been coerced under promise to give false evidence. The man against whom all this was directed was Mugerdich Maksabedian, one of the Armenian Notables of the city, who has held responsible positions, and been a member of the Municipal Council. For some reason the Vali feared his influence, and was glad of this excuse to shut him up in prison. Other arrests were made, among them a priest from Averig, and Rais Garabed of Satmants. The trial took place, and these three men with one other were condemned to death, while four others were condemned to six and one to five years' imprisonment. The most interesting part of this case is in the sequel, which has been enacted within the last sixteen days. The newly-appointed Patriarch at Constantinople, Izmirlian, hearing of this outrageous case, sent very recently for the priest above mentioned to come to Constantinople and give his testimony there. This alarmed the Local Government, for it was clear that an exposure of the fraud would prove most damaging evidence against several high officials here. In case of an investigation the evidence of Garabed of Satmants would have been feared very much, as he was a man very well known, and, moreover, was fully aware of the villainous proceedings which had thrown him and his innocent companions into prison. A fortnight ago last Thursday his son was allowed to see him in the prison, and after the visit the son returned to his village, evidently having no apprehensions on the score of his father's health. The very next day Garabed was carried out of the prison a dead man.

The last and most telling event in this chain of occurrences took place early the next Saturday morning. The night before a notorious Kurd imprisoned on a charge of murder was placed in the same room with Maksabedian, and other Armenians and Kurds. Early the next morning this Kurd, Omar by name, began to pound on the door to have it opened long before the hour when it was usually opened. Maksabedian ventured to suggest that the door would not be opened before the time, and that in the meantime he might allow his fellow-prisoners to rest, as it was not light yet. The Kurd made some offensive remark, to which no reply was made. Finally the door was opened, and the Kurd went out, and was overheard arranging with other Kurds to attack Maksabedian as he came out from the room. Hearing of this, Maksabedian did not venture to leave the room. The Kurd, however, soon returned, and seizing a water-jug, threw it at Maksabedian, but missed his aim. He then picked up a pot of cooked meat (cavourmah) and hurled it at him. It hit him in the forehead, cutting several gashes. The other Armenians in the room rushed to help Maksabedian, who was bleeding very freely, and sinking into unconsciousness, and then the remaining Kurds and Turks, who outnumbered the Armenians, joined in, and there was a general fray, every available dish and object being used as weapons. Only when the cry was raised,

"Maksabedinn is dead." did the guards come rushing in, and then for a time they joined the Kurds in further beating the Armenians. Finally the disturbance was quieted, but, much to the chagrin of the Turks, Maksabedinn was found to be still alive, and their ingenious plan for getting rid of him had proved a failure. All evidence for the above has been most carefully secured and sifted, and there is no doubt in the minds of any here as to the desperate plot on the part of the Government to assassinate Maksabedinn by the hand of this Omar, already under sentence for murder.

Case 7.—The case which has occupied the attention of the local Court recently has been that of Boghus-kessan. In October last sheep were stolen from this village of Boghus-kessan, about 20 miles from Van. An officer and some soldiers started in pursuit, and at a place about 5 miles from the village they came across a number of men intrenched. They were armed, and apparently meant to resist arrest. Some firing took place, in which a zaptieh was killed. The officer sent word to some of the surrounding Kurdish villagers to come to assist him in capturing the men, but none would come. A thunder-shower and darkness put an end to the attempt at capture. The next day the very man who had stolen the sheep turned up in the village, and told the officer in charge that those men were Armenian outlaws who had resisted him the day before.

The Government was informed, and as a result many arrests of Armenians followed. There are in the prison to-day twenty-four men charged with being connected with this affair. Among them is Khachedoor Natanean, who has land in Boghas-kessan, and was there at the time attending to his business, also his cousin Rupen, who was sick at Van when the affair took place, as his physician can testify. A swelling under his eye, the cause of his sickness, was said by the official to be a wound received in the battle. There are several others who do not even know the way to Boghus-kessan, and who are proved by scores of witnesses to have been here in Van at the time of the disturbance.

Another arrested was Boghos, the Rais of the village whose sheep had been stolen, and who was in the city at the time the affair took place.

The trial began some weeks ago, but has limped along till the present time. At first the English Vice-Consul and the Russian Acting Consul went to several sessions, and evidently soon made up their minds as to the farcical character of the whole proceeding. For instance, a half-witted Armenian, nick-named Vapore, was expected to give important testimony against the Armenians, but, to the surprise of all and the disgust of the Turks, he went back on all his instructions, and denied any knowledge of the affair. The President of the Court was manifestly so angry that he closed the session very abruptly. This Armenian was then taken to police head-quarters and tortured to such an extent that he promised to say whatever they wished, and at the next session, the Consuls not being present, Vapore contradicted all his previous testimony.

It remains to mention a tragedy in connection with this case, which overshadows every other detail. Last Thursday Rais Boghos was taken to the Court with others. Those who were near him say he seemed slightly indisposed, but not seriously ill. On Friday before noon it was announced that Boghos was dead. After the formalities the body was removed to the neighbouring church, S. Nushan. The next morning the wife of Boghos went into the room where the body was, alone, to see if she could discover any mark of violence. She made the horrible discovery that one testicle had been completely crushed, apparently with a hammer or stone. During the day the body was removed to the church of Arark, where the English Consul and an American physician saw the body and found the mutilation to be exactly as represented above, with apparently no other cause for death.

3. *Police and Gendarmes.*—Nominally this class exists to protect honest subjects and make it possible for them to live in peace; but the fact is they are the ones who are distinctly authorized by the Government to harass the Christians beyond all endurance. Here in the city, during three years past, more than 500 Armenian houses have been searched by the police, who have made free to take anything that suited their fancy. Protest on the part of the owners, of course, was useless. The following isolated instances will suffice to show what is taking place every day.

A policeman was sent a few weeks ago about the markets to collect dues on the weekly paper which is published here. He went to the counter of a young money-changer and demanded that he pay for the paper that was sent to his quarter. The young man protested on the ground that he knew nothing about it, and had never seen the paper, whereupon the policeman broke the glass case containing his coins, took what he wanted, and walked off. The young man went to the Mayor about it, who referred him

to the Commissaire of Police. This officer, on hearing his case, kicked him out of the room with the choicest of Turkish oaths.

A few weeks ago some zaptiehs went to Kurubash, 3 miles away, to collect taxes. After gorging themselves with all they could get out of the villagers, they demanded a certain woman whose husband happened to be away at the time. She fled to an Armenian from the city who happened to be spending the night in the village. He managed to protect her for two hours, but was finally obliged to give her up to the lust of these shameless brutes—and these were wearing the uniform of the protectors of the people, and within sight of the Governor's house.

Ten weeks ago zaptiehs were in the district of Moks collecting taxes. One poor Armenian, who was unable to pay what was demanded of him, was placed in a closed room and a continuous smoke kept up in it, the man being told that if he would become a Moslem they would release him. The man refused to deny his faith, and before many hours he was dead. Seeing his fate, nine others, including women and children, were frightened into declaring that they would become Moslems.

As to the conduct of the zaptiehs in the villages when collecting taxes it is simply impossible to give any adequate conception. They treat the villagers exactly as they please; rob them, beat them, curse them, and ill-treat them generally. There is no doubt whatever that every year scores of deaths are caused by the inhuman treatment which the poor defenceless villagers receive at the hands of the tax-collectors.

4. *The Prisons.* No words can picture the loathsomeness of these vile dens, where crowds of prisoners are huddled together in small rooms, which in the winter are absolutely without ventilation. Often from thirty-five to forty are kept in a room 10 feet by 13 feet.

The law provides that the Government shall feed certain rations to all prisoners, but, as a matter of fact, no Christians receive any food except bread from the Government. Their friends must provide them, and then in such quantities that the guards may take out their share and be satisfied to pass the remnant over to the prisoners for whom it was sent. An Armenian gentleman told the writer that for his two relatives he was obliged, for this reason, to send to the prison each day enough to feed six men.

The following is a partial list of deaths, &c., in the prison:—

On the 4th August, 1891, Seferian Mukti Sahag was killed by Omar and his brothers. Omar is in prison under fifteen years' sentence, but his brothers under ten years' sentence go free. One of them, Shakir, was so enraged against Movses, the son of Sahag, who informed the Government of his father's cruel murder, that he instigated the Government to arrest him as a revolutionist. Soon after, the young man Movses, who was educated in the American school at Van, was poisoned in the Shadakh prison.

Bedros Shadakhtse died in prison from cholera. No medicine allowed.

The murder of policeman Nouri in 1893 took place one night in front of the house of Shalvoreun. Mesak Shalvoreun, with seven other members of the family, were arrested. He and his son Dekran were beaten so cruelly that they soon died. The oldest son was tried and hung a year later.

The priest of Padagants, a man from Shadakh, and Pumpei Ashchiyun, died in prison, after being chained out in the prison yard during the winter.

Aziz Gajetsi died in prison.

Der Calousi died in prison, his wife not allowed to see him before death.

A man from S. Vartan, Garabed of Satman, and Boghos of Boghus-kessan, have died suddenly in prison within the last two months.

About three months ago an attempt was made to poison Karakeen, but antidotes were given him by friendly zaptiehs and his life was saved.

Yeghinzar Pandugisian was kept chained in a dungeon in winter weather till his feet froze, and finally the toes of both dropped off.

5. *The Kurds.*—A most thrilling chapter might be written about these bloodhounds of the Turkish Government, but let a few facts suffice to represent them in their true character.

As is well known, some of the largest of these Kurdish tribes live in these highlands of Armenia, and subsist principally by preying on the Christian villages. They are all armed better than the regular troops, and a large proportion have been incorporated into the army, and, as a mark of special honour, are called after His Majesty, Hamidiehs. The menace which they offer, in this new character, to the Government itself is no small matter, and as for the Christian population they kill and rob them with impunity. When these Hamidiehs came back from their butcheries at Sassoon, the Sultan sent them silken flags and decorations.

Hussein Pasha, who is a counterpart of the celebrated Mousa Bey, and is answerable

for countless crimes, was promoted to high honours, and to-day receives a salary from the Government. A few weeks ago some of his men arrived in a village. They had with them two girls, who managed to get a five minutes' talk with an Armenian villager. They begged him to tell every Christian he met that they were brought from Sassoon, and that twenty of their companions were in the harem of Hussein Pasha. By the way, there are at least seven or eight girls from Sassoon in different harems in this city. Not long ago two were in the house of the First Commissaire of Police, and one in an army doctor's house.

Emin Pasha, of the Adeljevas district, is another noted Chief. Not long ago he called an Armenian merchant, to whom he was owing 400 liras. He said to the Armenian, "You must give me a note to the effect that my debts to you have been paid." The man protested at first, but seeing that it was a question of his money or his life, he yielded, and lost his 400 liras. The merchant presented his case to the Government, even to the Sublime Porte, but never received an answer. A certain Kurd, Sultan by name, was owing another merchant 45 liras, but he so intimidated the man in his shop opposite the Government building that not only was the debt cancelled, but 15 liras in cash was counted out into the hand of the Kurd. This happened at the large town of Arjish last summer, and the man sent a telegram of sixty words to the Governor of Van, but no notice whatever was taken of the matter.

These Kurds not only have *carte blanche* as to the property and lives of the Christians, but as to the sanctity of their homes as well. In many villages no Christian dares refuse his daughter or wife to any Kurd. In a village near Arjish, a certain Dervish Bey ravishes women, in open daylight, in the presence of their husbands.

Special facilities were afforded the writer for collecting exact statistics in regard to the districts of Shadakh and Norduz. Within the past ten years between 80 and 100 Christians have been murdered by the Kurds in these two districts, and hardly one of the murderers has been brought to justice. And from only fifteen villages out of the whole fifty-one the number of sheep stolen during the past fifteen years has amounted to 12,000.

The following items taken from the records of a few villages scattered through the province give an absolutely correct idea of what is happening in all:—

Lim.—Twenty-seven Armenian houses, 240 men and boys; pay in taxes 100 liras, 40 kilehs in wheat, tithes (worth 30 liras). In the same village eighty Kurdish houses pay not a para in taxes. Last year the various zaptiehs going there used up 40 kilehs of barley, not paying for anything, killed 200 hens, and used butter, clover, &c., in proportion. The Rais harvested last year 50 kilehs of wheat, but when winter came he had but 20 kilehs left. Last year the Kurds forced the Armenians to give 500 days' work, thus obliging them to leave their own fields to take care of themselves. Last year the village shepherd was attacked by Kurds and killed, 290 sheep were carried off, 30 were run through with swords, while the fat tails of 10 others were cut off; 20 stacks of wheat and 10 of flax were burned to the ground, and a large amount of wheat carried off.

Karrelis.—In 1893 one man killed. In thirteen years 1,100 sheep and cattle have been stolen. During five years the Kurds have burned or stolen nearly 300 chaps of wheat (150 liras' worth). Last year they came and cut down fifty trees, all that the village had. Four years ago these villagers had 4,000 sheep, to-day they have barely 1,500. They are obliged to pay the Government in kind and cash, besides which Khalil Bey (Hamidieh) and Shakir demand their share yearly.

Vesik.—In 1891 Kurds stole 1 horse and 10 sheep; in 1892, 3 donkeys; in 1893, 158 sheep and 20 head of cattle. Complaint made to Government, result, Kurds two months in prison.

Hindustan.—Thirty-five houses. Eleven years ago Minas Mahoogian killed by the Kurds. Complaint made, but in vain. Ten years ago Shakolu stole 150 sheep, imprisoned two months and let go. Ten years ago Mehmet Agha stole 24 sheep, not punished; Ali Agha stole 35 oxen, 70 liras fine imposed, which Pharsi Kyatib Osman, a Government official, appropriated to himself. Nine years ago Mehmed Agha stole 195 sheep. The same year Ayib Khan Bey entered the village church on Easter night and stole all the church vessels; arrested, fined 50 liras, but the money never was paid, and he was let go. Same year many thousand bundles of clover burned; four years ago 505 bundles. Last year 135 sheep were stolen; all the church silver and vestments stolen, worth 500 piastres. Through complaint to the Government, a font, worth 100 piastres, was returned. Sheep, cattle, and grain besides were stolen.

Pertag.—In 1885, 550 sheep, 35 lambs, 2 donkeys, 15 chaps of wheat stolen. In 1891, 45 sheep, 6 lambs, 8 chaps of wheat. In 1893, 110 sheep, 2 donkeys, and other

robberies, to the amount of 100 liras. In 1894, 5 large bins of wheat broken open and robbed.

Astradzashen.—In 1889 robberies of houses by Kurds living in the village amounting to 3,000 piastres, also 30 cows and donkeys. In 1893, the Headman's ("Rais") girl was abducted; 8 chaps of wheat and robbery to 1,000 piastres. Additional, in 1883, 1 man killed. In 1884, 1,000 bundles of clover burned and 100 loads of straw. In 1885, 3 stacks of wheat and 300 bundles of clover burned.

Vesiping.—In 1880, 60 mule-loads of household goods and 40 oxen carried off, 1 man, Murad, killed. In 1881, 70 cattle and 50 oxen. In 1882, 100 sheep, 200 cattle. In 1883, 200 sheep. In 1884, 48 cows. In 1885, 12 oxen and 2 horses. In 1888, 6 oxen, 2 men wounded. In 1893, 13 chaps of wheat. In 1894, 2 oxen, 44 sheep, 3,000 bundles of clover, 200 chaps of wheat.

Upper Haigatsore.—Fifteen villages. A summary: In 1894, 324 chaps of wheat, 995 sheep, 1,200 bundles of clover, 4 cattle wounded, 1 man killed, 4 cases of rape. In 1893, 120 chaps of wheat, 950 sheep, 30 cattle, 33 liras cash. In 1890, 500 sheep. It ought to be added that this valley, only three hours from the city, is the best-protected district in the region, owing to its position, and the fact that its population is largely Christian. The taxes and tributes are very heavy indeed, and the plan evidently is to reduce the people as fast as possible to the condition of other villages in the remaining districts.

Adeljevas District.—This is the finest wheat-raising district of the province, and has been reduced by the Kurds to the last stages. Peshnagumere, the largest village, which used to pay taxes to the value of 1,000 liras, has been entirely deserted within the past year, and hardly a house remains standing. Four other villages adjoining it have been entirely deserted, while every other village has been depleted. During last Lent Hussein Pasha, with 120 horsemen, made a general raid on the district, pillaging, ravishing women, and committing outrages generally.

6. *Prospects for Crops.*—By careful inquiry, the writer finds that, on an average, a little more than half of what was sown last year has been sown this year, owing to poverty and fear of Kurds.

7. *Finances.*—Nothing is clearer than that financial ruin is imminent. And is it any wonder, in view of the above facts? Every harvest several hundreds of acres are burned to the ground. Villagers are robbed till they have barely enough to live through the winter. Money is an impossibility with them. To pay their taxes they are obliged to borrow at high rates of interest. The roads are unsafe for the villagers, for travellers, traders, or for caravans bringing goods. In the city itself merchants and artizans are robbed by unpaid Turkish officials, till both profit and capital are exhausted, and in order to pay their liabilities they go into bankruptcy. This process is going on every day.

The writer saw recently, in the hands of a foreign Consul, a document signed by more than 300 prominent Turks and Armenians of a large town in the district, asking for protection of life and property.

The following is a careful and accurate summary of the taxes and tithes paid to Kurds and Government by the Christians of the districts of Shadakh and Norduz, as over against what is paid by the Kurds to the Government. In these two districts there are 51 Armenian as against 100 Kurdish villages. The nominal taxes of the Kurds average 2,777 piastres, but it is extremely doubtful if they really pay even that amount, while the Armenian villages average 10,949 piastres, which they must pay somehow, or turn Moslem. In addition to this, each Armenian village pays as tribute to local Kurdish Aghas in kind and cash to the value of 2,690 piastres, and besides this, Shakir, the brigand chief, demands as his tribute from each village 1,000 piastres. So that, disregarding the amount of which these villagers are robbed yearly, they must each provide somehow payments in cash and kind to the value of 14,639 piastres, while for the whole number of the 51 villages the sum reaches 8,000 liras. Is it any wonder that in three years more than 200 families have moved away?

The entire revenues of the Province of Van are said to be 300,000 liras, of which anm the Christians pay five-sixths. They pay a road tax, but roads are never repaired; they pay money for protection, but there is no protection.

They pay for the salaries of officials, who are seldom paid. They pay an education tax, but the money is all turned into building Turkish mosques and sustaining Turkish schools.

Inclosure 2 in No. 244.

Extract from Letter from Dr. Barnum.

Harpoot, May 2, 1895.

AS the "Times" has not been allowed to come, we have been entirely in the dark as to English sentiment, and that is one of the most important elements in the present question. The Turks—officials and others—are showing great hostility to the Armenians. The relations between the two classes have never been so strained as now. Christians have an impression that their case is being considered by Europe, and that relief is at hand, otherwise they would not be able to remain quiet and bear the insults, the beatings, the cursings, the robberies, and oppressions to which they are subjected. In some parts of the country there seems to be a letting up of these outrages, probably through the dread of European intervention, but that is not the case here. After all I suppose that we are better off than most parts of the interior. We have had the reading of a letter in regard to matters in the region of Van. It is a horrible tale, but the materials have been collected with the greatest care.

Raouf Pasha, who was the best Governor that Bitlis ever had, has recently come here, and while he has done something in the way of reform, he is very severe upon everything that looks like nationalism, and there is no improvement in the relations of the people. The worst Governor in this region is the Kaimakam of Palu, Ibrahim Edhem by name; he is nothing less than a legalized brigand. Palu belongs to Diarbekir, so we cannot do anything with him here. He tells the Armenians that he was in the Sassoon region, and those people were innocent and inoffensive, and yet they were wiped out. "That is what I am going to do with you." He takes men to his house, and by threats and beating gets a great deal of money. The English Vice-Consul in Diarbekir has complained against him, and he has been called to the Mutessariflik of Maden, where he shared his plunder with his superior, and came back to pursue his nefarious work.

While writing the above I have been told that the Vali has a telegram from Arabkir saying that the Gregorian, the Protestant, and the Catholic churches have been defiled. A dead dog was cast into one, a cross, defiled with human excrements, was cast into another, &c., and the Vali says that probably the Armenians themselves did it for the sake of making trouble. Unless there is a radical change, and that soon, the result will be one fearful to contemplate. That is the way matters appear now.

Later, May 2.—Letters have come from Arabkir. A dog was cut in two, and a wooden cross was attached to one of the pieces, upon which were written threats unless they accepted the "true faith" (Mahommedanism), and this was repeated at the three churches.

Afterwards, several hundred Turks collected, and matters looked threatening for a time, but the Local Government managed well, and the crowd dispersed. This shows how ready the powder is for the spark.

The above extract is from the private letter of a foreign gentleman of the highest character who has resided in Eastern Turkey for thirty-five years, and one who is noted for his calm, deliberate judgment. It should be remembered that the situation which he describes is 200 miles distant from Sassoon, in a region in which the Armenians have not as yet shown the slightest symptoms of revolution, and yet they are being goaded to desperation by the cruel suspicions and unjust treatment of both the Turkish rulers and Moslem population generally.

Prompt and forcible intervention on the part of the European Powers is the only thing that can avert a greater and more terrible catastrophe than the massacre of Sassoon itself.

No. 245.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 25.)

(No. 196.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 29, 1895, *noon.*

I HAVE made strong representations to the Sultan and the Grand Vizier in favour of the release of the Bishops of Fernouz and Mousb, and the three Archimandrites and six priests who were brought to Constantinople about a fortnight ago.

The Grand Vizier, however, persists in delaying their release on the pretext of certain formalities to be first gone through, and they are still kept under arrest at the Ministry of Police.

No. 246.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 55.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May* 29, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 196 of to-day, stating that the Turkish Government have not yet released the Bishops of Fernouz and Moush and other Armenian ecclesiastics whom the Sultan has promised to set at liberty.

I request you to inform the Grand Vizier that Her Majesty's Government must consider it a breach of faith if the release of these ecclesiastics is further delayed on the ground of the non-fulfilment of certain formalities, as his Highness communicated to you a positive assurance more than two months ago that the Sultan had given orders for them to be set free.

No. 247.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 197.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 30, 1895, 12·55 P.M.

I AM informed that last night the Turkish authorities delivered to the Armenian Patriarchate all the ecclesiastics referred to in your Lordship's telegram No. 55 of yesterday.

No. 248.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 198.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 30, 1895, 3·45 P.M.

HER Majesty's Consul at Aleppo telegraphs to me that four boats from Cyprus loaded with fire-arms attempted on Sunday to land on the coast between Alexandretta and Lattakia.

Three of the boats escaped, but one was seized and 400 rifles were found on board.

Troops left yesterday morning for the Suedia district. Mr. Sanders is expected at Aleppo to-morrow.

I have telegraphed to Sir W. Sendall inquiring whether anything is known of these boats in Cyprus.

No. 249.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 199.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 30, 1895, 5·45 P.M.

FOLLOWING is a translation of the statement which Said Pasha delivered this afternoon to the three Dragomans:—

"We have not materially had time to examine the reform proposals, and you are therefore requested to ask your Ambassadors officially on the part of the Sultan to agree to our delaying the communication of our answer till after the Bairam fêtes."

No. 250.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 200.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May* 30, 1895, 6 P.M.

I SENT the following telegram to Mr. Hallward with reference to his telegram of the 27th instant, repeated to your Lordship in my telegram No. 195 of the 28th:—

"Williams is declared to be an Armenian agitator from Russia. Porte denies that any one of the men is English. If you have not seen Williams, ask Vali's permission to visit him, and let me hear by telegraph."

No. 251.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 201.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 30, 1895, 6·35 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram to your Lordship No. 199 of to-day, my French colleague and I have agreed to send our Dragomans to Said Pasha at once with a message to the following effect:—

"Having communicated the request of the Sublime Porte for delay to my Ambassador, I am now instructed to reply that in view of the Sultan's promise that his answer should be received by the middle of this week, my Ambassador expects the answer to-day. In the event of no communication being received from the Palace, his Excellency will consult with his colleagues as to what attitude they should adopt."

I am sending a messenger to M. de Nélidow, who is already at Buyukdéré, to ask him to make the same communication as soon as possible, and to come up to town for a meeting at the French Embassy to-morrow afternoon.

No. 252.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 30.)

(No. 202.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 30, 1895.*

FOLLOWING is the text of a telegram received at the French Embassy from the three Delegates:—

"*Mouch, le 20 Mai*, 1895.

"La police Turque, depuis que nous sommes à Mouch, nous a causé une quantité de petits ennuis; les gens qui nous parlaient ou que nous employions comme guides étaient arrêtés, on interrogeait, on menaçait même les gens du pays qui nous servaient de domestiques.

"Chaque fois, grâce au Président de la Commission, nous avons obtenu satisfaction, mais hier un fait plus grave s'est passé. Un gendarme disant vouloir emmener à la police un de nos domestiques, a pénétré chez nous; après lui avoir répondu que la police devait en référer à la Commission, nous étions sur le point de nous rendre chez le Président pour porter plainte, lorsque deux gendarmes vinrent garder une des portes d'entrée de notre maison.

"Pendant ce temps-là un agent de la police, escorté de deux autres zaptiés, pénétraient chez nous par l'autre porte, et montait jusqu'au premier étage. Mes collègues lui ayant renouvelé l'observation faite précédemment aux gendarmes, il répondit en grossièretés, et comme il voulait user de violence les cavass durent le mettre à la porte. Nous nous sommes aussitôt plaints au Président de la Commission de cette violation de notre domicile. Celui-ci a fini par nous promettre de réclamer du Vali de Bitlis le déplacement du Commissaire de Police responsable."

This afternoon we sent our three Dragomans to the Porte to demand as satisfaction for the outrage the execution of the following measures:—

1. An apology to the Delegates from the Mutessarif of Mousb on the part of the Vali of Bitlis.
2. The dismissal of the Head of the Gendarmerie.
3. The dismissal of the Commissary of Police, and the immediate arrest and punishment of the police agent.

No. 253.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 209.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 30, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 197 of to-day, reporting the delivery to the Armenian Patriarch of the ecclesiastics mentioned in your preceding telegram of the 29th instant.

I shall be glad to learn from your Excellency whether any Armenian ecclesiastics still remain in prison.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 254.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir F. Lascelles.

(No. 169 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 30, 1895.*

THE Russian Ambassador called here to-day and informed me that he had received instructions from Prince Lobanoff to make the following communication to me.

Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople had announced to his Russian colleague that, in the event of delay in the answer of the Porte to the project of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Asiatic Turkey, which had been submitted to the Sultan by the three Powers, the British Government, having regard to the excited state of feeling in this country on the subject of the Armenians, would be compelled to have recourse to measures of constraint.

Prince Lobanoff had in consequence telegraphed to M. de Nélidoff that in no case would the Russian Government associate itself with such measures.

I said that Sir Philip Currie had sounded his colleagues as to the steps which could be taken to put pressure upon the Porte, but that Her Majesty's Government had not come to any decision as to the course which they should pursue if their demands were not complied with.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 255.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received May 31.)

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Admiralty, May 31, 1895.*

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the decypher of a telegram, dated the 31st May, from the Commander-in-chief on the Mediterranean Station.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 255.

Rear-Admiral Sir M. Culme-Seymour to Admiralty.

(Telegraphic.) *Alexandria, May 31, 1895.*

THE Dutch Consul at Jeddah has telegraphed to British Consul at Port Said that on the evening of the 30th May, when walking about 500 yards outside the town, the British Consul, the Russian Consul, and the Chargé d'Affaires at the French Consulate were attacked and severely wounded by fire-arms, and the British Vice-Consul killed.

I have ordered Her Majesty's ship "Pique" to await Admiralty instructions at Suez. Her Majesty's ship "Dolphin" will leave Alexandria immediately, and will also await instructions at Suez.

According to a telegram of to-day from Mecca, there have been no deaths from cholera at Mecca or Jeddah since the 22nd May.

Her Majesty's ship "Pique" will arrive at Suez on the 1st June.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 256.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 203.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 31, 1895, 11·15 A.M.*

IN view of the importance of having some one at Mousb after the departure of the Commission to watch events and prevent reprisals on Christians, I propose, with your Lordship's sanction, that Mr. Hampson should be sent there from Erzeroum, and should receive a Commission as Vice-Consul for the Vilayet of Bitlis. Should your Lordship approve, I would ask the Porte, pending his formal appointment, to grant him a provisional recognition.

Please telegraph reply.

No. 257.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 204.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 31, 1895, 11 A.M.*

THE Court of Cassation has quashed the sentences on the Armoudan prisoners reported in my telegram No. 157 of the 30th April.

No. 258.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 205.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 31, 1895, 12·10 P.M.*

I INSTRUCTED Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van by telegram last night to endeavour to see the man Williams, mentioned in my telegram No. 200 of yesterday's date.

To-day I have received the following telegram from Mr. Hallward:—

"Vali tells me that bearer of passport has confessed that he is a native of the Caucasus, and not a British subject."

No. 259.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 207.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 31, 1895, 1 P.M.*

MR. GRAVES telegraphed to me on the 28th instant that, according to the latest letters received from the missionaries at Bitlis, they do not consider it safe to remain there after the Commission leaves unless some effective protection is assured to them, and there is no sign of anything of the kind as yet; that, had it not been that they feared to create a panic, they would have left Bitlis long ago. If the necessary assurances are not forthcoming, Mr. Graves advises that the missionaries should come to Erzeroum on the pretext of attending the annual meeting there.

Mr. Graves asked me to communicate the substance of his telegram to the Bible House here, and to the United States' Minister, adding that a reassuring message from the latter would be most welcome to the missionaries.

I did as Mr. Graves requested, and I am now informed by the American Chargé d'Affaires that he considers that the missionaries need feel no apprehension, the Grand Vizier having promised to telegraph to the Bitlis authorities to afford them every protection.

No. 260.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 208.)
(Telegraphic.) *Constantinople, May 31, 1895.*

FOLLOWING from Consul at Jeddah:—

"While outside town last night with Vice-Consul, Russian Acting Consul, and French Consular Secretary, were shot at by supposed Bedouins. Dr. Razzack killed; self and others seriously wounded."

No. 261.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 209.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 31, 1895, 7·15 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 201 of yesterday, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that this morning our three Dragomans were summoned to the Palace, where they were told by Tahsin Bey, the Sultan's First Secretary, that Said Pasha had a communication to make to them. They thereupon called on his Excellency, who read them a message in Turkish, of which the following is a translation:—

"The Embassies will be unofficially informed before Monday morning, when Bairam commences, what is to be done upon the Memorandum which the Dragomans communicated unofficially on the part of the three Ambassadors on the 11th instant."

My French and Russian colleagues and myself met this afternoon to consider this answer. Their opinion was that we should await the receipt of the promised communication, as they considered that this message was in a more binding form than those previously sent, and their information led them to believe that His Imperial Majesty would accept the plan of reforms, subject to possible modifications on four points:—

1. The appointment of Valis for five years.
2. The subdivision of the vilayets.
3. The direct communication of the Dragomans with the proposed Commission.
4. The appointment of a number of Christian functionaries proportionate to the various creeds, instead of a fixed proportion of one-third.

My colleagues were not, under these circumstances, prepared to discuss the question of the pressure to be exercised, which your Lordship instructed me to raise in your telegram No. 52 of the 27th instant. We are to have another meeting on Monday, when we shall consider the communication promised by the Sultan before that date.

No. 262.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 210.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 31, 1895, 7 P.M.*

THE Russian and French Ambassadors and myself have agreed to send our respective Dragomans to the Porte to inquire as to what intelligence the Turkish Government had received respecting the recent attack on the Consuls at Jeddah, and as to what measures had in consequence been taken. The Dragomans are instructed to urge that in view of the approach of the Bairam festival the Government should take the greatest precautions against fanatical outbreaks at Jeddah and elsewhere. The French Ambassador has recommended to his Government that a French ship should be sent. The Russians have none available, as their only vessels in the Mediterranean are two gun-boats acting as "stationnaires" at Athens. Lord Cromer informs me that he has suggested to the British Admiral to send a ship. I would submit to your Lordship that it is very important that this step should be taken at once.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE LONDON

No. 263.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(No. 211.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, May 31, 1895, 10·20 A.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 182 to your Lordship of the 17th instant, I have the honour to state that after having communicated with the Vali of Bitlis the Grand Vizier has informed me that if the nomad Kurds are forbidden access to their pasturing grounds through the Sassoon district they will starve. His Highness, however, states that with a view to maintaining order and preventing the Kurds and Armenians from attacking each other, he has given orders that gendarmes and soldiers shall be posted along the road.

No. 264.

Lord Cromer to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received May 31.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Alexandria, May 31, 1895.*

OUR Consul at Suez has received a telegram from the Dutch Consul at Jeddah that an attack was made yesterday with fire-arms on the English Consul and French Chancellor, who were out walking at a distance of about 500 metres from the town. They were seriously wounded, and the British Vice-Consul was killed.

I have suggested to the Admiral that he should send a ship at once to Jeddah.

No. 265.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 56.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 31, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 203 of to-day, and I approve the appointment of Mr. Hampson as Her Majesty's Vice-Consul for the Vilayet of Bitlis, to reside at Mousb.

No. 266.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 57.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, May 31, 1895.*

I SHALL be glad if your Excellency will concert with your French and Russian colleagues in regard to the satisfaction to be demanded from the Turkish Government for the attack made at Jeddah on the Consular officers of the three Powers.

I presume that you concur in the advice given by the Agent and Consul-General at Cairo in his telegram of to-day that a ship of war should be sent to Jeddah.

No. 267.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 210.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, May 31, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 307 of the 14th instant, inclosing a Memorandum by Mr. Block relative to the attitude of the Grand Vizier as regards the various cases of oppression and misgovernment on the part of Turkish officials, reported by Her Majesty's Consular officers in Asiatic Turkey, to which your Excellency had called the attention of the Porte.

I approve Mr. Block's remarks on the subject to the Turkish Minister for Foreign Affairs, and I think it would be advisable that your Excellency should take an early opportunity of emphasizing them by informing the Porte that the answers given to the representations addressed to it by Her Majesty's Embassy are regarded with grave

dissatisfaction by Her Majesty's Government, who desire to warn the Turkish Government of the serious impression made upon them by this constant disregard of their remonstrances.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 268.

Foreign Office to Colonial Office.

Foreign Office, May 31, 1895.

Sir,

IN my letter of the 29th April I transmitted a copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo relative to the alleged presence in Cyprus of revolutionary Armenian agents, and suggested, by the direction of the Earl of Kimberley, that inquiries should be made of the High Commissioner on the subject.

I am now directed by his Lordship to transmit herewith, for the information of the Marquess of Ripon, a paraphrase of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* reporting an attempted landing on the coast between Latakia and Alexandretta of four boats with fire-arms from Cyprus.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 269.

Miss L. Hope to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 1.)

MISS L. HOPE presents her compliments to Lord Kimberley, and begs to inclose for his perusal the copy of part of a letter just received from Nazareth from the lady at the head of the Protestant Orphanage and schools there. Miss L. Hope is Honorary Secretary of the Missionary Society which supports these schools ("Society for Promoting Female Education in the East," a Society now sixty-three years old), and as the news is very disquieting, she thinks it is only her duty to let Lord Kimberley know, though he probably has the same information from other sources.

7, *Ovington Gardens, London, May 31, 1895.*

Inclosure in No. 269.

Extract from a Private Letter from Nazareth, May 17, 1895.

IT is only right that you should be kept "au courant des affaires," for I do not suppose the papers will give any information, but the country is certainly getting more and more unsettled. The Moslems and Christians are continually fighting, and, if report is to be believed, more than fifteen Christians have been killed in Tyre, and many more wounded this week. The Wali of Beyrout has gone to look into matters, and all the soldiers in the district have been ordered to Tyre. If report is true, then of course Europe must interfere, according to Treaty of 1860. In the meantime the Governors of every district are forcing the Christians to sign papers stating that they are at rest and ease, &c., under the present Government. Here they would not sign such a paper, but said the Heads of their religion must sign, and they would not. The new Governor here, too, is behaving in an abominable way, getting money out of the people in most unjust ways—imprisoning them if not willing to pay for relations (though dead) back ground taxes, or neighbours' taxes, if the neighbour happens to have got away—taxes of fifteen years and more back, which have probably been paid, but papers not kept. Mrs. Huber's men who live on her premises are all summoned and threatened with imprisonment if they do not pay up taxes of the former owner from whom Mrs. Huber bought the ground. I wonder if they will attack us next?

Report says American frigates are anchored outside Jaffa, Haifa, Tyre, and

* No. 243

several off Beyrout. The officials know their time is short, so they are robbing the people in every possible way, while they have the opportunity.

We wonder what will happen, but every one thinks there must be a change soon. But I trust it will not mean much bloodshed, for Turkey is too frightened and weak to resist if Europe should interfere, and they had better for this country at the same time as Armenia.

No. 269*.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.—(Received June 1, 12·10 P.M.)

(No. 212.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 1, 1895.

BY order of the Sultan his Private Secretary came to see me last night and expressed his Majesty's deep regret at the outrage committed on the foreign Consuls at Jeddah. He informed me that stringent instructions on the subject has been sent by telegraph to the local authorities, who had already effected several arrests.

No. 270.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 214.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 1, 1895, 11 A.M.

AN American missionary at Bitlis, named Mr. Cole, has sent me a Turkish telegram *en clair*, reporting that sixty-five inhabitants of Sassoon have died so far from want of shelter and starvation in their villages.

He adds that measures should be taken at once to distribute relief.

I have asked our Delegate what steps the authorities of Moush are taking, and I am drawing the attention of the Porte to the matter.

No. 271.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 215.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 1, 1895, 7·10 P.M.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 202 of the 30th ultimo in regard to the violation by the police of the Delegates' domicile at Moush, I have the honour to state that the Porte has granted the satisfaction demanded.

No. 272.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 1.)

(No. 216.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 1, 1895, 7·15 P.M.

FOLLOWING with reference to my telegram No. 210 to your Lordship:—

Both the Grand Sherif and the Vali of the Hedjaz have been summoned to Jeddah by the Porte.

The guilty persons are to be tried by court-martial. The number of arrests amounts to ten.

Throughout the Empire the Turkish authorities have been instructed to take special precautions during Bairam to maintain order.

No. 273.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 210 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 1, 1895.

THE Turkish Ambassador called upon me to-day and read to me a despatch from his Government expressing deep regret at the attack on Her Majesty's Consular officers at Jeddah.

His Excellency said that immediate orders had been given for a strict inquiry, and the punishment of the offenders, and that several Bedouins had already been arrested.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 274.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

Foreign Office, June 1, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter of yesterday relative to the murderous attack on British and foreign Consular officers at Jeddah, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, copies of two telegrams on the subject from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople.*

I am to state that Lord Kimberley will be glad if their Lordships will send orders for Her Majesty's ships "Pique" and "Dolphin" to proceed at once to Jeddah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 275.

Sir M. Durand to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 40.)
My Lord, *Tehran, May* 3, 1895.

WITH reference to my despatch No. 39 of the 21st April, I have the honour to forward a further report by Mr. Paton regarding the alleged massacres of Armenians in Turkish territory.

As Mr. Paton has now been recalled to Tabreez, I have authorized Mr. Wood to charge his travelling expenses, and to grant him an allowance at the rate of 1*l.* a-day during his absence. I trust this is right.

Mr. Paton seems to me to have worked hard and intelligently, and though the result has not been very great, I hope his proceedings will meet with your Lordship's approval.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. M. DURAND.

Inclosure 1 in No. 275.

Mr. Paton to Consul-General Wood.

Dear Mr. Wood, *Tabreez, April* 15, 1895.

AS mentioned in my last communication to you of the 5th instant, I took a trip to Van in order, if possible, to interview the men who, it was said, had just arrived from Turkey. On my arrival at Van, however, I found that the men had only remained there for a night, and passed on to Russia.

When I had got a short distance on my return journey to Khoi, I came across about twenty men resting by the roadside, whom I at once recognized as Armenian mountaineers. As we were on the open plain, with no one in sight, I could talk to them freely, and at once proceeded to find out who they were.

From what they then told me I thought I would get some very useful information

* No. 262 and 269*.

from them, and accordingly chose two of their number whom I asked to follow me to Khoi. Going along I asked them some questions, and they gave me every reason to believe they could give valuable information about what happened in the neighbourhood of Sassoon.

Being, however, a little doubtful about them, I did not interview them further that night, but said I would do so in the morning. The following morning I accordingly proceeded to examine them more fully, and, as I had feared, their story of the morning did not at all coincide with what they told me the previous afternoon.

At night my servant had given them some quiet advice in regard to telling the truth, as, he said, I would soon find out if they did not do so, and this had evidently induced them to make their best efforts to follow his advice.

The result of my examination was that they stated they were on their way back from Erivan to Van, the latter of which places they had quitted last autumn on hearing of the massacre in Sassoon and the general order for the destruction of the Christians. They also said they had left their families in Van and were just returning to see if they were still alive, and were not sure whether or not they would return to Erivan. They said the Russians made no difficulty whatever about their getting over the frontier. They also told me that great numbers of fugitives were settling round Erivan, but they believed all those who had escaped from Sassoon had gone on to Tiflis. They knew nothing about the present troubles personally, and what they had told me the previous day they had heard from those round Erivan. They, however, made a statement with regard to their native village, which I inclose for your information, as it helps to show that what is now going on in these parts is only an aggravation of the state of affairs which has existed for some years back.

I received your telegram recalling me about 8 P.M. on Saturday; left Khoi on Sunday morning about 10 A.M., and arrived at Tabreez about noon on Monday.

I have, &c.
(Signed) ROBERT MOIR PATON.

Inclosure 2 in No. 275.

Evidence of Hosef, son of Ohanes, Khiskhan (south of Sekert).

OUR village, which we left about two years ago, consisted of nearly 200 houses, all Armenian.

Our first serious trouble was when the son of Osman Agha, of the Adian tribe of Hamedia Kurds, came about two years and three months ago and took from us four mules and 200 sheep. Not long after this Mustapha Agha, another son of Osman, entered our village, killed four men and one woman and six children, among the latter of which was one of my sister's sons, a child of 6 or 7 years of age. They forced eight girls to become Mussulmans, and when they left carried off other four men, who were afterwards found dead. At the same time they carried off all our property, herds and grain, and destroyed our houses, so that we were left destitute. We went to the Governor or Vali Pasha of Sekert in a body complaining of what had taken place, but he only said we lied. We had therefore no alternative but to seek a new home, but before separating we all went on to Moks and then to Van, where we laid our complaint against the treatment we had received before the Vali. He telegraphed to the Vali of Bitlis asking how we had come to leave our village, and he replied because we were unable to make a living. We, however, told the Vali it was because we had been driven out. He telegraphed to the Sultan, who asked for proof of our assertions. Hadji Tamar, a kind of Kurdish Sheikh living near our village, was applied to, and he said that we had killed eighteen Mollahs, and for this reason we were driven out of our village. The Sultan gave order that we were all to be put to death, but through the help of the then Catholicos Hatchatoor we all escaped to different places, some going to Russia, some settling in Alashgert, and we remained in Van until last autumn.

No. 276.

Sir M. Durand to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 42.)
My Lord, *Tehran, May* 3, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a copy of a letter which has been addressed by Dr. Wright, of the American Mission at Salmas, to Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez, giving information as to the state of things prevailing, and of the anxiety felt by the foreign Christian residents at Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. M. DURAND.

Inclosure in No. 276.

Dr. Wright to Consul-General Wood.

Dear Mr. Wood, *Huftewan, Salmas, April* 12, 1895.

THE following is an extract from a letter from Van, Turkey, written by Mrs. Dr. Reynolds, an American missionary, to Miss Van Duzee, of Oroomiah, under date of the 15th March last:—

"Our life now is peculiarly a life of faith. We know not what a day may bring forth, and all ahead looks very dark. We seem hardly an inch removed from massacre here in the city. Notwithstanding all that has been said, and the presence of the Commission at Moush, things are growing rapidly worse, and the Government seems bent on the extermination of the Christians.

"Unless there is a very radical change soon—and of this there is no promise—starvation will stare most of this people in the face. So many have fled or been massacred that the extent of ground sown to wheat is much diminished, and consequently flour and bread are now twice the normal price.

"I don't see how people are to live through the coming summer any better than through this winter, only that they will not need fires, and can find a few greens.

"There is a great deal of sickness from three years of insufficient nourishment. It is not scores who are suffering, but thousands."

This letter was a private one, and I would not think it wise to make Mrs. Reynolds' name known, so the word would not get back to Turkey, for the Turkish Government is much opposed to the missionaries giving out any word as to the state of the country, and they do not wish to be considered as spies. Still, I feel you ought to know the above facts, and take the responsibility of reporting them.

Yours, &c.
(Signed) JOHN N. WRIGHT.

No. 277.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 334.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May* 23, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith an analysis made by Mr. Ponsonby of the lists of Armenians at present in prison for political offences, showing also the number who have been released, and comparing the statistics furnished by Her Majesty's Consuls and by the Armenian Patriarchate.

One reason for the discrepancies between the two lists is that the Consular Returns only mention those prisoners about whom accurate information can be obtained. Thus no entry is made under the head of Erzinjian, though it is certain that a considerable number of prisoners are detained there.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 277.

List of Armenian Prisoners, taken from Consular Reports dating from March 25 to May 21, 1895, and compared with List communicated by Armenian Patriarch, March 9, 1895.

Name of Vilayet and Town.	Number of Prisoners. Consular Report.	Number of Prisoners. Patriarch's List.	Remarks.
Erzeroum .. .. (May 10)	57	75	10 have been five years in prison without sentence. 4 ecclesiastics.
Released	(32)		
Dead	..	5	23 condemned to death (according to Patriarch).
Erzinjian, &c.	..	78	Mr. Graves unable to furnish information.
Bayazid	..	18	All discharged (according to Mr. Graves).
Karakilissi	Several	1	
Diadine	..	2	
Sivas .. .. .. (May 8)	109	31 named, more known of	Evidence insufficient in majority of cases. 43 were awaiting trial on 25th March. 65 condemned to various terms of imprisonment.
Released	(39) 22 priests		
Karahissar	15–20	47	
Azizieh	8	..	
Tokat .. .. .. (May 21)	30	30	5 sentenced. Charges appear unjust and evidence insufficient.
Amassia .. .. (May 8)	5	10	In October 1894, 210 were arrested; 202 released; 20 to 25 were rearrested, and discharged after a few days.
Dead	(3)		
Bitlis	..	14	No Consular Report, but a despatch from Mr. Graves (No. 86, Confidential) describes ill-treatment to which prisoners are subjected.
Mousb	..	20	
Van	99	31	Sentenced to 3–5 years' imprisonment. 2 sentenced to death.
Mamouret-ul-Aziz.			
Kharpout	32	16	17 of these have not yet been tried.
Diarbekir .. .. (April 12)	10	9	Arrested at Palma in 1891.
Rest of Vilayet	31	Several	A large number besides were arrested as political offenders, and released after some months' imprisonment.
Dead	(11)	known of	
Angora .. .. (March 25)	8	8	Now in Yozgat prison. Majority sentenced to death.
Trebizond .. .. (April 6)	49	Over 50	15 under trial. 6 condemned.
Released	(25)	9 named	
Smyrna .. .. (April 2)	20	4	Some without knowing nature of their offence and without trial. Archbishop Nigoyos imprisoned at Boulrom for two years, and now again for five years.
Adana	21	11	Mostly arrested for being implicated in treasonable correspondence.
Released	(1)		
Dead	(1)		1 ecclesiastic, Archimandrite Khorene.
Aleppo .. .. .. (April 18)	70 and 4 exiles	Over 11	26 for sedition at Zeitoun in 1892.
Released	(3)	..	Gaulel, Archbishop of Zeitoun. Johannes, Archbishop of Urdjin. Nighrighos, Archbishop of Fernouz. One Bingazam Khandamian has been lost sight of.
Jebel Berchet	6	..	
Urfa	18	..	Awaiting trial.
Constantinople	..	29	No Consular Report.
Acre .. .. .. (May 1)	77	67	Exiles: 12 chained in the fortress. 12 exiled for an uncertain time. The rest detained in the fortress town.
Pyas	12	..	7 exiles as well (according to Patriarch's list).

Name of Vilayet and Town.	Number of Prisoners. Consular Report.	Number of Prisoners. Patriarch's List.	Remarks.
Tripoli in Barbary ..			
Konia			
Marmara	..	Over 31	Exiles (according to Patriarch's list).
Kastemouni			
Rhodes			
Constantinople .. .. (*May* 28)	..	..	Patriarch's list gives 39 ecclesiastic imprisoned or exiled:— 9 Metropolitans. 8 Archimandrites. 22 Priests. According to a communication from Patriarch, the following, having been released from local prisons, are being detained in Constantinople:— The Bishop of Fernouz; The Bishop of Mousb; Rev. Daniel, of Cesarea, Vartabed; Rev. ——, of Van, ,, Rev. Kevork, of Urfa, ,, And six other priests.
Total { Over	..	634	According to Patriarch's list.
Total { ..	590	..	According to Consular Reports, which do not include Constantinople, Vilayet of Bitlis, exiles, or Erzinjian prisoners.

No. 278.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 335. Confidential.)

Constantinople, May 23, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that Major Heber Percy has applied, through Her Majesty's Consulate at Jerusalem, for facilities to visit Kerak, which, like other districts beyond the Jordan, is closed at present to all tourists.

In view of the consideration laid down in Lord Granville's despatch No. 158 of the 31st March, 1882, I have not thought it advisable to support this application at the Porte, as the district in question is in a disturbed state, and the Turkish Government seem to have no real authority there.

As an instance of the insecure state of the neighbourhood of Kerak, I may mention that Mr. Gray Hill, whose previous difficulties with the Bedouins were reported in Sir W. White's despatch No. 209 of the 15th May, 1890, was attacked last month near Kerak by, as he believes, the same Mujelli tribe who attacked him in 1890, but on this occasion he appears to have suffered no loss or injury. Mr. Gray Hill was well aware of the dangers he incurred by travelling in those regions, yet he and his wife started on their journey without waiting for the special protection which at the request of this Embassy the Sultan had consented to grant.

As I am confidentially informed by the Grand Vizier that the authority of the Mutessarif is practically null in the districts surrounding Kerak, I would submit to your Lordship that it is useless to attempt to procure redress for the recent attack on Mr. and Mrs. Gray Hill, and that it is desirable to discourage travellers from proceeding east of the Jordan under present conditions.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 279.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 337.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 26, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 146 of the 2nd March last, in regard to the alleged seizure of school books and arbitrary conduct at Mar Bishu of the Vali of Van, I have the honour to inclose copies of a despatch from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van stating that the Vali did not visit Mar Bishu last year.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

P.S.—I have informed the Rev. Mr. Edington, of Urmieh, of the substance of this despatch.

P. C.

Inclosure in No. 279.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Van, May 14, 1895.*

IN reply to your Excellency's despatch of the 20th ultimo, I have the honour to report that I inquired of the Vali respecting the seizure of the school books at Mar Bishu, and his Excellency denied all knowledge of the matter. He said that if the books were in the Nestorian language they would be sent to the Mutessarif of Hekkiari at Julamerik.

The village is close to the Persian frontier, in the Caza of Guever, which is in the Sandjak of Hekkiari. It is consequently in the Vilayet of Van, and I do not know what the Vali meant by saying, in the answer he gave to the Grand Vizier, that Mar Bishu is not in his province. It is true that he did not go to the village himself last year, the nearest he went to it was Wizzu, the centre of the Guever Caza, which place he visited last August.

The action complained of must therefore, I conclude, have been taken either by the Kaimakam of Guever or by the Mutessarif of Julamerik.

I scarcely know how to arrive at the truth of the facts here, but should I be permitted to visit Hekkiari, as I proposed in my despatch of the 1st instant to Mr. Graves, I might take the opportunity of visiting Mar Bishu, and ascertaining what occurred on the spot.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 280.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 339. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 26, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 301 of the 11th instant, I have the honour to inclose herewith to your Lordship copy of a further despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum regarding the ill-treatment of Armenian prisoners at Van and Bitlis.

I am communicating the substance of this despatch to my French and Russian colleagues, and shall call the attention of the Sublime Porte to the statements made therein.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 280.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, May 15, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 23rd ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting the ill-treatment, resulting in death, of certain Armenian prisoners in the Van gaol, and urging the necessity of some effective measures being taken for the protection of the survivors.

The case of the Van prison is, unfortunately, not an isolated one, but would appear to be part of a system for crushing out the spirit of Christians suspected of disaffection by applying to them in prison whatever brutal and degrading torture may suggest itself to the perverted imagination of their gaolers. Police, legal authorities, and medical officers all seem to be in league to screen the latter, and when the victim happens to succumb a medical certificate is never wanting to attribute his death to "natural causes."

In support of these allegations I have the honour further to transmit herewith copies of two documents, the first being an appeal addressed to the British newspaper correspondents in Armenia by inmates of the Bitlis prison, who earnestly request that their identity may not be made public, for fear of consequences; the second, an account given by three Notables of the village of Kurtalaz, in Passin, who were unjustly detained in the prison of Hassan Kalé, at about 18 miles from Erzeroum, for over two months, and lately released on no case being found against them. Of course, I am unable to vouch for the strict accuracy of these statements, but I venture to express my belief that they are in the main correct, and that a searching and impartial inspection of prisons throughout these districts would bring to light numerous instances of similar practices.

Some of the details of the Bitlis appeal would be almost too horrible for credence at any other time or in any other country, but I am free to confess that I am no longer able to withhold belief from such stories merely on the ground of their intrinsic horror.

I may mention here that the keeper of the Bitlis prison, one Abdul Kadir, who figures so largely in my second inclosure, receives a salary of but £ T. 3 per mensem, yet he has recently built himself a house at a cost of £ T. 500, besides employing two or three agents to do business with the capital he has wrung from imprisoned Armenians.

The conclusion I must draw from these and similar cases is that the instructions which may be sent from the Porte, under pressure, to Governors-General as to the better treatment of the Christians under their jurisdiction have not yet been allowed to percolate to those lower ranks of officials who are themselves the most active offenders, while the absolute failure, so far, to punish, or even blame, the persons responsible for recent massacres and atrocities can but serve as a direct encouragement to that whole class to persist in their evil courses.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 280.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Van, May 7, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch of the 16th April, respecting the treatment of the Armenians in prison here, I must again take the liberty of calling your serious attention to that matter.

On the 18th ultimo the accused in the affair of Bogaz Kessen (see list of prisoners inclosed in my despatch of the 23rd April), including Bogos, Kéhyin or Headman of that village, were brought before the Criminal Court to be examined. Bogos was unwell at the time, but not apparently seriously ill. That night he died in prison; no priest was called to see him as is usually done when a man is at the point of death.

On the morning of the 19th ultimo his body was handed over to the Bishop and placed in a church in the town. His widow went early next morning to the church,

and subsequently informed me that, having examined the body, she found that one of the testicles had been crushed. I accordingly requested the Doctor of the American Mission to accompany me to the church in order to verify the truth of this statement. This he kindly did, and we found that in fact the right testicle was completely crushed. there were no other marks on the body, which was not wasted, and did not bear signs of having undergone any long illness.

The Vali afterwards showed me the official medical certificate, stating that Bogos had been ill for some days and had died of some internal disease, which I understood to be disease of the kidneys. As for the external injury, he said that must have been done after death, possibly by the Bishop or his wife—an absurd supposition. The Doctor could not say, simply judging from what he saw, whether it was done before or after death, and the Bishop did not examine the body when it was brought to him.

I delayed reporting the case in order to try and discover whether there was any reason to believe that the injury was inflicted by some malicious person in order to make a case against the Government, but I have been unable to find any proof or hint whatever to lead me to suppose that such was the case.

I asked the widow whether before seeing the body she had heard of what her husband had died, but she said that she knew nothing about it till she examined the body of her own accord.

I have done my best to ascertain the opinion of impartial people here as to the probability or possibility of such an injury being inflicted on a dead body by any Armenian; their opinion seems to be that the Armenians here would have a superstitious fear of committing such sacrilege, even if they wished to make political capital out of it.

On the other hand, it is difficult to assign a motive for such a barbarous crime, except that the deceased assumed a somewhat bolder attitude than the other villagers in refuting the testimony given in Court against them. The unfortunate man's death is the more regrettable as he was not even in the village when the attack on the zaptiehs was made, but had come to Van to lodge a complaint against some Kurds who had stolen some of his sheep.

On the 5th instant another man died in prison, viz., Eliazar, Kéaya of Avarak (see list of prisoners), who was one of those condemned to six years' imprisonment for the so-called attempt on the Vali's life.

As I reported in my despatch of the 16th April, another of those implicated in this affair died in prison about three weeks ago, and an attack was made on a third by Kurds in the prison, with the result that he was badly wounded.

With regard to Eliazar, he was given food by a friend on the day preceding his death, and was then apparently in good health. No priest was called to attend him, and when his body was handed over to the Bishop's representative, the latter was told by the police to have it buried in a churchyard close to the town, and at a considerable distance from the churchyard where Bogos was buried, which is nearer this Consulate. I see no reason for this measure, unless there were marks on the body which they did not wish to be examined, and, in fact, one side of his body was black and blue, apparently from beating.

Three Armenian villagers have thus died suddenly in prison within the last three weeks under suspicious circumstances, and I would venture to urge most strongly that some really effective measures should be taken for the protection of the remaining prisoners. The Procureur-Général and Head of Police are primarily responsible for the existing state of things, but as nothing whatever is done by the officials here without the knowledge and consent of the Vali, the final responsibility must rest on the latter. I am certain that no change for the better will be effected without a change of officials.

A further irregularity in the prison is that Karrekin Paghesdsian (*vide* my despatch of the 8th January, 1895) has been now for more than a year in solitary "police" confinement, the rule being that a prisoner may be so detained for eight or ten days till his preliminary examination is concluded.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

Inclosure 3 in No. 280.

Appeal of Bitlis Prisoners to the United English Press Correspondents, Erzeroum.

(From 1892 to the present time Bitlis Prison = Hell.)

Honoured Sirs, *Bitlis Prison, March 28, 1895.*

IN the Bitlis prison there are seven cells, each one large enough for ten to twelve persons. There are between twenty and thirty persons crowded into each one. There are no sanitary arrangements. Offal, bugs, lice, fleas, and human excrement are heaped together. Armenians found in these cells have to do their purchasing through the zaptiehs, and at double price. They are deprived of immediate communication with those outside, and letters directed to them are not delivered. What they are allowed to write must be in Turkish, and, to get it written, 2 piastres, or bread equivalent to the daily allowance, must be given.

The daily allowance of bread by law should be 300 drams, but it is never more than 250 drams, and that is dirty and poorly baked. Often this is not delivered. The water is undrinkable. Armenians often have to drink the "khalitch" water. This is the water of the tank where the Turks perform the "abdest" ablutions for prayer.

Should one dare to ask for justice, he is at once thrown into a damp subterranean cell. Armenians in these cells are the slaves of the caprice and severity of the Turks.

Caspar Khapoian, of the village of Avzood, Moush. This man had his head and arm broken by the prison keeper with an iron shovel.

Seroon Manoogian, of Vertannes, Moush. The zaptiehs violently beat and strangled this man.

Mehran Damadian, of Constantinople, was taken to Moush, being beaten and ill-treated by the way. Put into chains and handcuffed, he was brought to Bitlis with a broken leg.

Melo Mukhian, Verto Boghosian, of Mushaghshen, in Moush, died a few days after release from prison from the effects of the ill-usage sustained in prison.

Muggerditch Sughertsian, of Bitlis, died a few days after release from prison from the effects of ill-usage in prison.

Giragos Asdvadzadourian, of Gundza, village of Modgani, died in prison from the effects of ill-usage.

Maderos Sahagian Asugmperi, of Keghi, after fifteen days' imprisonment in Bitlis, died from the effects of ill-usage. £T.9 found on his person were appropriated.

Malkhas Aghajanian, Serop Malkhasian, of Avzud, village of Moush, were beaten into a fainting condition. Malkhas was burned in eight places, and Serop in twelve places, with hot irons. A zaptieh forced his penis into Serop's mouth.

Hagop Seropian, of Avzud, village of Moush, was stripped to his shirt and drawers, and beaten till he fainted, and then a girdle was thrown round his neck, and he was violently forced to the zaptieh office, where he was branded in sixteen places with red-hot swords. A zaptieh forced his penis into this man's mouth. He was kept on his feet for five days and nights without food and drink. He was also subjected to violent beatings and plucking out of hair.

Serko Minasian, Garabed Malkhasian, Koro Asdvadzadourian, of Avzud, village of Moush, were violently beaten, forced to remain standing for long times, and the contents of the vessel containing human excrement were poured over their heads.

Hachig Minasian, of Moush, was choked with ropes till he fainted by Mukhe Tchoush.

Korkon Mardoian, of Semal, village of Shadakh, was subjected to violent beatings, plucking out of hair, and forced to remain standing on his feet for twenty-four hours. Then Mudazini Hadgi Ali and the prison keeper, Abdul Kadeer, forced him to perform the "Shaitan Tope" (Satan's ring: the hands are tied together, and the feet are tied together by the great toes, and forced between the hands); and then they committed sodomy on him, resulting in his death. Korkon was 15 years old.

Caspar Semonian, of Khass, village of Moush, was beaten for nine nights by zaptiehs, by the order of Mukhe Tchoush and Captains Eskender and Hadji Faicem. They bound him hand and foot, and committed sodomy on him every day, resulting in his death. He was 35 years of age.

Mukhetar Safarian, Khacho Bulotian, of Kakarlu, of Boulanik, were forced by the

prison keeper to perform the "Shaitan Tope," and he committed sodomy on them. Makhefar was 15, and Khacho 13, years of age.

Sogho Sharoian, of Alvasenj, village of Moush, was kept in Moush prison in an iron collar of 9 okes, and heavier chains on his feet. He was brought to Bitlis prison in handcuffs. The zaptiehs kept him in their room three and a-half months. Often they forced him to stand for a long time, hungry and with beatings. They committed sodomy on him. When he would faint they poured water on him to revive him, and then they would beat him again. They plucked out his hair, and burned him with hot irons. Sogho was 30 years old, and was Damadian's servant.

Markar Manoogian, of Vortannes, of Moush, was violently beaten by zaptiehs in Mushagshen. On the way to Bitlis the zaptiehs forced him to carry them by turn on his back, and when his strength gave out they beat him. They kept him one night in a hole made in the snow. They kept him awake three nights without food and drink, and did not allow him tobacco, to which he was greatly addicted. He was hanged on the 27th February, 1894.

Saghatiel Meizoian, of Hosh Geldi, Boulanik, was kept standing without food and drink for long times together, hair plucked out, violently beaten, choked by ropes, and three times was thrown into a faint. The prison keeper caused him to be bound to a ladder, and beat him with his shoe on the stomach, back, and head, and then spit in his mouth.

Hampartsoom Boyajian (Murad), of Hadjin, of Adana, was arrested by the soldiers in a cave at Hartk village on the 23rd August (4th September), 1894. He was kept three days under the sun that he might sicken. On the 28th August the soldiers took Hampartsoom and his companions to Semal, where Zekki Pasha was. They were beaten and imprisoned in a church, and were not allowed to go out to attend to Nature's wants, but were forced to make water in the church, and evacuate the bowels on the church altar. With twenty-one companions, Hampartsoom was brought to Moush prison, and kept there for two months. In one month six of them died from the effects of ill-usage. They were kept in chains. Eight days after they were brought to Bitlis two more died. Four days before being brought to trial Hampartsoom was forced to stand twenty-four hours without food or drink, and subjected to other tortures (beating and plucking hair, &c.). A foot-chain of 9 okes was put on his hands. His foot-chains are now made heavier, he is subjected to torture, and Kurds are enjoined to beat him. He is forced to clean privies.

Oh, where are you, Christian Europe and America? Where are you, humane Europe and America? Where are you, civilized Europe and America?

(Signed) VARTANOUCHT N. V. KARAKHANIAN.
AGHA BEY BEDROSIANTZ.
MUSHEG H. NAZARIAN.
[illegible].

Note.—In the publication of this, care should be taken as to the signatures, that the misery of the prisoners be not increased.

Inclosure 4 in No. 280.

Memorandum respecting Ill-treatment of Armenian Prisoners at Hassan Kaleh.

AT Kurtabaz, in the Caza of Passin, early in February last, gendarmes came to collect taxes. They went away, taking 1,800 piastres, including a bribe to themselves to go; but the day after their departure three more gendarmes arrived and demanded 700 piastres on account of taxes, and 100 piastres for themselves, which the villagers were unable to pay. The gendarmes abused and roughly handled some of the Headmen of the village, who had sat down to eat their food, and, on the latter objecting, they went for their rifles. Coming back they found the house-door closed, on which they proceeded to fire several shots through it with their rifles, fortunately without hitting any of the inmates. Then, seeing that the villagers were gathering in some excitement and indignation, they threw down their rifles, mounted their horses, and rode off to Hassan Kaleh, where they reported that they had been attacked and disarmed by the villagers of Kurtabaz. Three of the Armenian Headmen took the rifles to Hassan Kaleh to return them to the authorities, when they were at once arrested and imprisoned. Their names are Usta Vehsi, Gul Beg, and Mardiros Der

Casparian. These men have lately been released on bail, after seventy days' confinement, and tell the following story of their treatment in prison:—

Though they were men of standing in their own village, they were required to do the most menial services in the prison and Government offices. They were beaten and abused in the most shameful way, and their Kurdish fellow-prisoners told them that they had received orders to ill-use the "Giaours" in every possible way. They were put into a room which was already so crowded with Kurds that the latter had not room to stretch out at night to sleep. There they were assigned standing-room in a corner, and were obliged to pass fifteen successive nights standing and leaning their backs against the wall. In their corner was a hole in the wall used as a privy, the filth and stench of which was indescribable, and their bodies were soon covered with vermin. Eventually they succeeded in gaining the good-will of some of the Kurds by feeding them, and so obtained a place in which they could sit down at nights. One of those Kurds, a notorious cut-throat, was punished by having his ration of bread cut off, and was put in chains for having befriended the "Giaours." They were in prison during part of Ramazan, when they were not allowed to eat during the day nor to sleep at night, nor were they allowed tobacco. They declared that, if the Kurd referred to above had not befriended them they would have died in prison.

No. 281.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 340.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 26, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Lordship's despatch No. 203 of the 21st instant, instructing me to take some means of bringing to the attention of the Porte the oppressive and violent proceedings in connection with the conversion to Mahommedanism of Christians in the Asiatic provinces, referred to in the Armenian Patriarch's communications of the 22nd April and 2nd May.

I think that the best opportunity of carrying out your Lordship's instructions will occur when clause 10 of the Memorandum which accompanied the plan of reforms of the three Powers comes under discussion.

The matter is one in which the Russian Ambassador takes great interest, and the clause in question was suggested by him. I propose, therefore, to invite his co-operation in taking such steps as may be necessary to give due effect to its provisions.

It would not be advisable to quote the Patriarch's authority in support of any representations I may make to the Porte, as the irritation against his Beatitude is at present very great, and no attention is paid to the complaints made by him on behalf of the Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 282.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 341.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of papers which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch, giving an account of an insult to the Christian religion, and of other incidents affecting Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 282.

Papers communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

Insulte à la Religion Chrétienne.

TROIS jours avant la fête de Pâques, au chef-lieu du Sandjak de Segherd (Vilâyet de Bitlis), quelques Turcs ont confectionné deux croix en bois et les ont jetées dans des immondices à l'entrée du marché, sur le point le plus fréquenté de la ville. Ceux qui s'étaient rendus coupables de ce sacrilège attendaient aux deux côtés du cloaque formé par les immondices, et montraient les croix aux passants Arméniens en leur disant: "Voilà la croix à laquelle vous croyez; elle se trouve dans des immondices, crachez dessus et enfoncez-la davantage dans le cloaque."

Les Arméniens se sont empressés de porter ce sacrilège à la connaissance du Gouvernement. Sur leur demande le Métropolitain Arménien de Segherd a fait également des démarches auprès du Mutessarif, qui n'a donné aucune suite à l'affaire. Désespérant de la justice de l'autorité locale, les Arméniens se sont adressés au Vali de Bitlis, par l'entremise de leur chef spirituel, mais leurs démarches n'ont pas abouti à un résultat quelconque.

La Profanation à Arapguir.

Résumé de deux Rapports, en date du 24 et 25 Avril.

Les lenteurs calculées que le Gouvernement local met dans l'enquête à laquelle il s'est livré à la suite de la douloureuse profanation de la cathédrale de notre ville montrent suffisamment qu'on ne veut pas pousser cette affaire en avant, sachant à quelle conséquence elle peut aboutir.

En effet, quoique les auteurs de cette profanation ne soient pas encore connus, on peut avancer hardiment qu'ils ne peuvent être que des Turcs, car la profanation a eu lieu pendant la nuit; tout le monde sait que le Gouvernement a défendu aux Arméniens de sortir de leurs maisons, après 2 heures de la nuit à la Turque, les contrevenants à cet ordre sont arrêtés et emprisonnés par les patrouilles de la garnison, par les agents de la police, et par les gardiens de nuit, tandis que les Turcs sont libres de circuler, toute la nuit, même sans lumière.

Cette profanation est la conséquence de l'impunition dont jouissaient, malgré les plaintes de l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne, les auteurs de plusieurs autres profanations et sacrilèges. Cette impunition continue d'ailleurs pour les Musulmans de notre ville et pour les élèves des écoles Turques, qui insultent les prêtres Arméniens en proférant les paroles les plus outrageantes contre leur sacerdoce.

Les dangers que la liberté de conscience et la sécurité des Chrétiens courent à Arapguir s'aggravent de jour en jour. Lors des recherches opérées chez les Arméniens, le Gouvernement avait saisi toute espèce d'armes et même les outils en fer de plusieurs artisans. Ces armes ont été distribuées à la jeunesse Turque d'Arapguir, dont le fanatisme est notoire. Cette jeunesse, ainsi armée, se livre à de terribles menaces contre les Arméniens; elle croit s'acquitter d'un devoir imposé par la religion en vexant les Chrétiens, espérant ainsi leur faire accepter la religion Musulmane.

Conversion de Mineur.

Un Arménien mineur de Tchmélon, nommé Kirkor, a été dernièrement conduit à Rédiéto, sous prétexte d'avoir embrassé l'Islamisme. L'autorité ecclésiastique de cette ville, basant ses démarches sur l'âge du jeune homme, qui ne permet pas la conversion, a demandé qu'il lui soit livré. Mais le Gouvernement a retenu le jeune Kirkor au Commissariat de Police de cette ville, malgré la constatation de sa minorité.

Ce jeune homme est tout dernièrement arrivé à Constantinople et placé à l'École Impériale des Arts et Métiers, où aucun cours de la langue Arménienne et de la religion Chrétienne n'existe et où, d'ailleurs, il reçoit une instruction religieuse Musulmane.

Le Patriarcat de Constantinople a demandé que ce jeune homme lui soit livré, conformément aux privilèges ecclésiastiques.

Kirkor est à peine âgé de 14 ans.

Profanation d'Eglises dans le Sandjak de Césarée.

Les paysans Arméniens, habitant dans le village de Yénidjé, dépendant de la ferme de Harmandjik, propriété de Riza Pacha, possédaient depuis trente ans une église offerte au nom de Sourpe Toross.

Cette église se trouvant en état de délabrement, les dits paysans ont dernièrement projeté de la démolir et de reconstruire une nouvelle église en bois, un peu plus large et plus haute. Le village étant situé dans une propriété privée, ils ont cru suffisant d'obtenir pour cela l'autorisation verbale de Chevki Bey, Caïmacam du district de Dévelton, duquel relève la ferme de Harmandjik. Chevki Bey étant allé à Yénidjé pour affaires, avait vu la reconstruction de l'église et y avait consenti, déclarant qu'il n'y avait pas besoin d'autres formalités.

Mais vers la fin de Janvier dernier il est revenu sur cette déclaration, et, se trouvant de nouveau à Yénidjé, il a demandé le paiement d'une somme de £T. 30, menaçant les paysans de démolir l'église.

Les habitants n'ayant pu payer cette somme, il a envoyé des gendarmes à Yénidjé, qui ont démoli une partie de la construction et qui en ont muré l'entrée.

Ces paysans ont été tellement terrorisés que pendant des mois entiers ils n'ont pas pu oser faire des démarches pour se plaindre de la conduite du Caïmacam de Dévelton.

Le dit Chevki Bey s'est dernièrement rendu également coupable d'une autre profanation.

Sous prétexte de chercher un fugitif, il est entré dans l'église d'Evêque et, montant à l'autel, a osé se moquer des préceptes et des cérémonies de la religion Chrétienne.

Profanation d'Eglise dans le Vilayet de Van.

Résumé d'un Rapport, en date du 19 Avril (v. s.), 1895, arrivé de Van.

La population Arménienne de Van, dont les souffrances, par suite de l'insécurité régnante et les vexations du Gouvernement, deviennent de jour en jour plus intolérables, a aussi, depuis quelques temps, à se plaindre des faits d'insultes à la religion Chrétienne et des profanations dont la fréquence est vraiment désespérante.

A Chadakh un Capitaine de l'armée régulière nommé Cheikh Mouss, a osé suspendre une croix au cou d'un chien et de le promener ainsi dans le marché. Le Métropolitain *ad interim* a énergiquement protesté contre cette profanation auprès du Vali, Bahri Pacha, mais le Capitaine n'a été nullement inquiété. Les Kurdes ont profané l'église Arménienne du village de Khospe. Le Gouvernement en a été averti par un Takrir du Métropolitain, qui a demandé la punition des coupables; ses démarches sont restées encore cette fois sans résultat.

La Situation en Cilicie.

Résumé d'un Rapport, en date du 20 Avril, 1895, arrivé d'Alexandrette.

LE 18 Avril dernier (v. s.), l'Abbé Nersès Taniélianz, de la congrégation du monastère de Sis, et chef spirituel de la communauté Arménienne d'Alexandrette, se

trouvait sur le quai de débarquement de cette ville pour souhaiter la bienvenue au Révérend Abbé Yézéguiel, Métropolitain *ad interim* de Diarbékir, qui venait d'y arriver, pour continuer son voyage vers son poste. Les agents des Douanes ont tout d'un coup entouré les deux ecclésiastiques et les ont conduits dans une chambre obscure, où ils les ont écroués. C'est en vain que les ecclésiastiques Arméniens ont protesté contre cette manière d'agir; des agents de police y sont arrivés, et sur l'ordre des agents des Douanes, ont vidé les poches des dits ecclésiastiques, leur ont pris les chapeaux, dont les parois ont été soigneusement examinés, et ont même exigé que les deux Abbés enlèvent leurs bottes, pour voir si des papiers n'y avaient pas été cachés. Les protestations énergiques des deux ecclésiastiques n'ont eu aucun effet.

Les agents de police n'ont trouvé dans les poches de l'Abbé Yézéguiel que quelques lettres officielles de Sa Béatitude le Patriarche Arménien de Jérusalem, qu'ils ont saisies, de même qu'une lettre du Patriarcat de Constantinople, contenant des instructions relatives aux affaires courantes du diocèse.

Cette conduite du Gouvernement envers les deux ecclésiastiques, ayant une situation officielle, a causé une émotion bien vive chez tous les Chrétiens d'Alexandrette.

D'ailleurs, la terreur continue faire dans le Sandjak d'Alexandrette que dans toute la Cilicie, où les souffrances de la population augmentent de jour en jour.

Dans le village de Kerek-Han, c'est le sous-lieutenant Mehmed, Chef de la garnison de la localité, qui pressure la population en emprisonnant les pauvres gens pour les causes les plus futiles.

Il y a deux jours, le dit sous-lieutenant, accompagné de quelques soldats, a opéré une descente dans le "Han," tenu par Matouk Erkékian, qui a été battu et que le sous-lieutenant a même menacé de mort en dirigeant sur lui le canon de son fusil; Mehmed a, de même, fait arrêter ceux des habitants de la localité qu'il soupçonnait de posséder quelques biens, et, après les avoir emprisonnés, a exigé de chacun d'eux le paiement d'une somme de 5 Medjidiés, pour les laisser en liberté. Sur les prières des détenus, cette somme a été réduite à 3 Medjidiés, pour chacun, que les villageois ont dû payer pour recouvrer leur liberté.

Au point de vue de la moralité, ce Mehmed est le personnage le plus ignoble qu'on puisse concevoir; il ose prendre publiquement des libertés contraires aux bonnes mœurs avec les femmes des Chrétiens. Il a dernièrement envoyé des soldats chez le nommé Minass Topal-Sarkissian, pour lui enjoindre de lui envoyer sa femme. Topal-Sarkissian a naturellement refusé d'obéir à cet ordre. Il a porté plainte auprès du Vali d'Alep, demandant la protection de l'honneur conjugale. Mais le Vali ayant envoyé le dossier de l'affaire au Caïmacam de Belen pour faire une enquête, celui-ci dans son rapport a déclaré la plainte de Topal-Sarkissian sans fondement. Les Arméniens se sont de nouveau adressés au Vali par une pétition collective pour demander justice.

Les prisonniers d'Adana, au nombre de trente, ainsi que ceux de Tchork-Merziman, continuent à rester sous les verroux. Le Vali d'Adana agit avec une cruauté inouïe envers eux.

A Adana, les prisonniers Arméniens, dont plusieurs des adolescents, se trouvent dans le même cachot que les pires criminels, et cette promiscuité est cause d'horribles attentats et outrages.

Par cause de vénalité le discorde est grand parmi les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement à Adana; tout le monde veut profiter de la méfiance que l'autorité centrale montre envers les Arméniens et quand un fonctionnaire gagne plus qu'un autre l'animosité commence entre les partis et c'est là une nouvelle cause de pression et de persécution contre les Arméniens.

Nous répétons que cet état de choses est général pour toute la Cilicie et que chaque jour les autorités ecclésiastiques Arméniennes reçoivent de nouveaux rapports relatant la situation insupportable à laquelle est réduite la population Arménienne.

Résumé d'un Rapport, en date du 25 Avril (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé du Village d'Alabache (Cilicie).*

La population Arménienne du village d'Alabache, composée de 300 maisons, est réduite à la dernière misère par suite des exactions et les vexations du Gouvernement.

Depuis plusieurs années cette population ne connait plus le pain de froment; il n'y reste que dix ou quinze maisons possédant de quoi se nourrir avec du pain de millet, le reste est privé même de millet et se nourrit d'herbes sauvages et de fourrages.

Les exactions qui se commettent de la part des percepteurs des impôts privent la population Arménienne de ses dernières ressources. Les percepteurs saisissent le bétail du pauvre villageois. Dernièrement, à Zeytoun, un mulet d'une valeur de 1,000 piastres, saisi pour dette d'impôt et mis aux enchères par les percepteurs, a été vendu à 80 piastres. Il arrive souvent que des ânes sont vendus de 8 à 9 piastres.

De nombreuses démarches ont été faites de la part de la population d'Alabache, pour solliciter des remèdes à cette situation; mais les autorités ont toujours fait la sourde oreille.

La Situation à Bitlis.

Résumé d'un Rapport, en date du 14 Mars (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Bitlis.*

L'enseignement dans les écoles Arméniennes de Bitlis court, depuis plusieurs mois, un grand danger, par suite d'un ordre du Gouvernement local.

Dans la journée du 7 Novembre, 1894, Nouri Effendi, Directeur de l'Instruction Publique du vilayet, a visité toutes les écoles Arméniennes de Bitlis en compagnie de Mehmed Effendi, agent de police. Il a défendu l'usage de la langue Arménienne dans l'enseignement et a ordonné aux instituteurs de faire usage exclusivement de la langue Turque, dans les leçons de mathématiques, d'histoire, de géographie, &c.

Cet ordre, tout à fait contraire aux privilèges ecclésiastiques, équivaut à l'interdiction absolue de l'instruction chez les Arméniens, car la jeunesse de Bitlis est absolument incapable de comprendre des leçons faites en Turc.

Il équivaut, en même temps, à nier l'individualité nationale des Arméniens, garantie par les Firmans et les Bérats.

No. 283.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 342.)

My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1895.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 183 of the 18th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General in Beyrout in regard to the disturbances at Tyre, and the measures which have been taken in consequence.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 283.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, May 18, 1895.*

WITH reference to the late disturbances at Tyre, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that they originated in an altercation between two boatmen who were disputing the right of conveying ashore a new Cadi from the coasting-steamer. Fire-arms were not employed in the affray that ensued, and there does not appear to have been any premeditated attempt to disturb the public peace.

The Vali arrived at Tyre early on the morning of the 13th instant in the Turkish gun-boat from this port. He was accompanied by the Procureur-Général, the Juge d'Instruction, a Mufti, and four Notables of Beyrout, two of whom were Christians and two Mussulmans.

A force of twenty-five soldiers were landed at Tyre, and they were reinforced the same day by a small detachment from Acre.

All persons implicated in the riot were immediately arrested, and, after a full investigation, twenty-three were ordered to be sent to Beyrout for trial. Eight of the number are Christians.

The Vali embarked from Tyre on the 16th instant, leaving behind him the troops he had landed there for the protection of the town. He also established a guard-house, situated between the Mussulman and Christian quarters, to insure the maintenance of order.

His Excellency informed me on his return to Beyrout that he had touched at Sidon and issued a Proclamation to the inhabitants of the town and district warning them to be peaceful and law-abiding.

This prompt and energetic action of the Vali has undoubtedly made an excellent impression on the populace, and convinced them that the Government is in earnest.

The overbearing fanaticism displayed of late years by the Metawalis is attributed in great measure to Budda Beg Saleh, the ex-Kaïmakam of Tyre, who, being himself of Persian descent, and a firm adherent of the sect, did not use his authority to curb their fanaticism. The newly-appointed Kaïmakam is a Turk, and reported to be a more trustworthy official.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

No. 284.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 3.*)

(No. 313.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond in regard to the state of affairs in the Sivas Vilayet, and of the dangers which threaten the Christians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 284.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, May 21, 1895.*

IN his letter of the 14th instant Dr. Jewett remarks that the state of affairs in the Sivas Vilayet is daily growing worse and more threatening, adding that if reforms are not carried out soon there is fear for the safety of the Christians.

"To-day," he reports, "in the market-place a zaptieh demanded taxes of a very poor Armenian, who is unable to pay. Fearing arrest, the Armenian started to run away. The zaptieh threw him down, stamped on him, kicked him on the face, head, breast, and then threw his sword and struck at him to kill him. Turks and Armenians interfered. The Armenian was taken to prison and severely beaten for resisting the police."

The following are some notes on the various complaints made either verbally or in writing to Dr. Jewett within the last few days:—

1. The Moslem Mudir and Sub-Mudir of the Hodis Nahié wrote that the Commander of the Hamidiehs, Michrali by name, had for years despoiled them of their lands and farm products, and made life unendurable. They presented many Petitions to the Sivas authorities, but Michrali got the Petitions set aside, and took renewed vengeance on the villagers. These Turks, seeing no hope from the Government, have appealed to the Consuls.

2. An Armenian reported that on the third day of Ramazan, in a village of Shirkisla, the Mudir, Hadjee Habib, and another Turk broke into the room occupied by this Armenian and his companion, accused them of being political agitators, demanded money, stole a watch, 4 medjidiehs, and a sheep. The Kaïmakam arrested the Mudir and the other Turk. Robbery proved by Turkish witness. Mudir's brother-in-law testified that Mudir said he would get 60*l.* out of these Armenians

or ruin them. On the request of Michrali, the Commander of Hamidiehs, the robbers were discharged.

3. Armenian villagers stated that at the village of Patrink Keuy, nine hours from Sivas, two years ago, Michrali got hold of their fields and pastures, but let them remain in their houses until last autumn, when he took their houses and their title-deeds. Their appeal to the authorities had no effect, hence ten families migrated, and two families went into partnership with Hadjee Ahmet to cultivate his farm. They contributed twenty-two sheep, one pair oxen, one cart, some farm implements, and household goods. During the year Hadjee Ahmet allowed them 5 kilog. of wheat and 2 kilog. of barley. At the end of the season he sent them off, kept all that they had brought, and defies the Government. They are now homeless and destitute.

4. An Armenian cashier, of Enderes, complained that seven years ago he was illegally deprived of his property, and that, though seven Petitions were given by him to the Sivas authorities, the case was each time referred back to Enderes, and has not yet come to an end.

5. Two Armenians reported that about two weeks ago, at Yara Su, in Hayus, fifteen hours from Sivas, they were robbed and wounded by Karapapaks. They traced the robbers to a place half-an-hour distant from Michrali's village, and informed the Commander of the Gendarmerie. He sent them to the Municipal Doctor to get a medical report on their wounds. The Doctor refused to make out a report unless he was paid 20 piastres for it. They had no money, and the case was dropped.

6. Kissisoglou Toros, of Kutin, five hours from Zara, reported that eleven months ago his brother Garabet, while tending his flocks, was killed by Kurds, one of whom, Dilo, is living two hours distant from the pasture. They stole some of his sheep. Police charged 200 piastres to investigate, and did nothing. Three months later the same family was robbed again. Robbers were arrested, but released on payment of small bribes.

7. Several Armenians reported that at Kangal, Osman Chaoush, a tax-collector, had beaten six Armenians and one Turk who could not pay their taxes, and said he would shortly return again and do worse. At Manjaluh he put ten Armenians between two lines of zaptiehs, and had them beaten on the head with whips and sticks.

8. Several Armenians reported that in the village of Hantiros tax-collector Mustaphioglou Ismail and others had beaten the villagers, threatened them with their swords, and said they would come back and slaughter the Giaours.

9. Tashjoglou Krikor reported that twenty-five years ago he bought of a Turk a house in Sivas. Three years ago he closed a part of it. The mother of the man from whom he bought it entered by force and occupied the part he had closed. The Court decided that she must be evicted, but during the time between the decision of the Court and the execution of the sentence she left and installed her daughter in the house. The Court now says there must be a new trial.

10. Kelajoglou Garabet wrote that, doing business at Kemis, near Kochissar, seven months ago, he was robbed and wounded by Turks who broke into his shop at night and stole 20*l.* to 25*l.* worth of dry goods. He recognized three of the men—one was allowed to go to Constantinople on a false "teskereh," two were imprisoned for two months and let out.

11. Two Armenians reported that ten months ago some Turks stole 22*l.* worth of hides from them from Epsiler, eighteen hours from Sivas. At the time they gave a Petition to the Kaïmakam of Kochissar. The stolen goods were found in the possession of the robbers, but they were allowed to keep them, and nothing has been done about it.

12. Erenia Gendjian wrote that two years ago he was robbed and seriously wounded by Turks in the village of Lommanad (Tozanli). The Municipal Doctor certified that he was incapacitated by his injuries, but the authorities neglect his case.

13. Odabashian and Kazandjian Co. on the 3rd February delivered twenty-four sacks of sugar to Kutchuk Hondioglou Mustapha and Boscoglou Lenyo to be transported from Samsoon to Sivas, and paid 3*l.* freight in advance. These men took the sugar to Marsovan, sold it, and also sold their horses, so that they could not be attacked. The Government neglects to interfere.

14. The inhabitants of the village of Parine, nine hours from Sivas, affirmed that they were being ruined by the Circassians and other emigrants, cattle carried off, fields destroyed, &c.

15. The inhabitants of the village of Pacha, ten hours from Sivas, stated that

their lives were rendered miserable by Government officials, and by Circassian emigrants, who carry off their animals, ravage their fields, and threaten their lives to such extent that they do not dare to go from their houses to cultivate their farms.

16. The inhabitants of Hantóros, eight hours from Sivas, made similar statements.

17. Kurdlon, seven hours from Sivas, made the same complaints.

18. Sokomnoglon Kassah Boghos, of Sivas, affirmed that his brother Stepan was killed by Abdullah, son of Kurd Mohamed Ali, and robbed of 3,000 piastres; Mohamed Ali, being rich, corrupted the Court of Justice, and the murderer is free.

19. Minas Sherbetdjeoglon, of Sivas, wrote that Eeide Chaoush, assisted by the Kaimakam of Zarra, had his son Simon imprisoned on the false charge of stealing a horse, in order to get possession and make a Mahommedan of Simon's wife. He carried off all the furniture from Simon's house, and caused the death of one of their children.

20. The inhabitants of the Armenian village of Hanzar, three hours from Sivas, stated that their Mahommedan neighbours will not permit them to pasture their 2,000 sheep on their own fields. Last week the Mudir and others of the Turkish village Bey-punar caused to be read in the Armenian school of Hanzar a notice stating that if the Armenians pastured their sheep on those fields they would not be responsible for the consequences, that the Turks would do all in their power against them, and that then there would be no relief for the Armenians unless they accepted Mahommedanism.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 285.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 344.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 309 of the 14th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond in regard to the posting of revolutionary placards at Sivas.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 285

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, May 21, 1895.*

WITH reference to the posting up of placards at Sivas, made the subject of my despatch No. 65, Dr. Jewett reports as follows:—

"On the 8th a fight occurred in the prison. Two Armenians were severely cut three others badly bruised about the head and face, and several other Armenians slightly wounded. The Armenians claim that the fight was instigated and planned by the police, and give some proofs that it was desired by the Government in order to check the friendly feeling expressed in the placards between Turks and Armenians. I am credibly informed that the placards were made by Turks and Armenians, but the Turk who chiefly assisted is a rich but not a very serious or representative Turk. Two Armenians and one Turk were arrested for the affair and soon discharged. . . ."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 286.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 345.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum in regard to a proposed journey by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van.

I have telegraphed to Mr. Graves that I do not propose authorizing the journey for the present, as, if the scheme of the reforms for the Armenian provinces is put into operation, Mr. Hallward's presence may be required either at his post or elsewhere.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 286.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May 15, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, in answer to a suggestion of my own, in which Mr. Hallward proposes that he should be authorized to make a tour in the southern part of his district during the coming summer on the public service, and gives a sketch of the places to be visited during the proposed tour, which would occupy four or five weeks, and entail an expense not exceeding 50*l.*

I need not point out the advantage there would be in authorizing Mr. Hallward to make this journey, both for the valuable information to be acquired as to the condition of the country at the present juncture, and the knowledge it would give him of a most interesting portion of his district, with which he is still unacquainted, and which seems likely to occupy attention before long.

Although your Excellency did not consent to Mr. Devey's visiting Ourmi, in Persia, before going to see the Nestorian Patriarch at Kochannes last year, I venture to hope that Mr. Hallward may be allowed to include that visit in his programme, as it is the only way in which he can obtain the preliminary information about Nestorian affairs of which he would have need when visiting Mar Shimun.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 286.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Sir, *Van, May 1, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to request for authorization to visit the Cazas of Guever, Shemdinan, Beit Esh Shebab, and Julimerik, including Kochannes, the seat of the Nestorian Patriarch, in Hekkiari, during the forthcoming summer, at the public expense. I have not yet had the opportunity of visiting that part of my Consular district, which is largely inhabited by Nestorians, nor of making the acquaintance of their Patriarch, Mar Shimun. As little information is to be obtained here regarding those districts, it may be considered desirable that I should acquaint myself on the spot with the state of things prevailing there.

Should Her Majesty's Government consider it desirable that I should make this journey, I would beg to suggest that I should be allowed to go first to Ourmi, in Persia, which is at no great distance from Dizza, the centre of the Guever Caza. My object in doing so would be to obtain some preliminary information respecting the Nestorians from the missionaries there, who are well acquainted with the country inhabited by the former on both sides of the border, and I should thus be enabled to obtain more satisfactory results from my journey.

The proposed tour would probably occupy about a month or five weeks, and entail

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an expense not exceeding 50*l.*; should it be authorized, I would propose to start towards the end of June, supposing that I could conveniently absent myself from Van at that time.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 287.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 346.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 28, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 329 of the 22nd instant, in regard to the destitute condition of the sufferers from the Sassoon events of last year, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I received a telegram from Mr. Shipley on the 23rd instant to the effect that a crowd of some 100 women and children, together with about twenty men, had assembled near the premises of the Commission and refused to stir until relief had been given them.

The effect of this assembly had been to force upon the immediate attention of the Commission of Inquiry and of the local Relief Committee the necessity of doing something to relieve the people. The three Delegates suggested that whenever it should be desired to resettle them in their villages the men should be induced to go first and construct huts, and that the families should subsequently follow, the means of living being supplied by the Relief Fund.

Mr. Shipley added that more refugees were expected, and that the situation would then become more aggravated.

On the receipt of this telegram the Dragomans of the three Embassies drew the attention of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the subject, and his Excellency promised to take the necessary measures at once.

Since this representation was made I have received a further telegram from Mr. Shipley stating that, owing to the conciliatory measures adopted by the President of the Commission, the crowd had dispersed quietly, that the local authorities had acted with circumspection, and that bread had been distributed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 288.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 348.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 29, 1895.*

IN reply to your Lordship's telegram No. 52 of the 27th instant, I have the honour to state that the Dragomans of the three Embassies called upon Saïd Pasha to-day, and left with him the communication of which I have the honour to inclose a copy herewith. His Excellency's only reply was, "Nous nous en occupons très sérieusement."

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 288.

Communication made to Saïd Pasha.

LES Ambassadeurs d'Angleterre, de France, et de Russie ont reçu l'assurance qui leur a été donnée par l'ordre de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan que la réponse du Gouvernement Impérial au projet de réformes leur serait communiquée au milieu de la semaine. Ils ont pris acte de cette promesse, et nous sommes chargés de rappeler à la Sublime Porte qu'il est nécessaire que la communication ait lieu ce soir ou demain au plus tard.

No. 289.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 349. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, May 29, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copies of Memoranda by Mr. Block, giving an account of an interview he has had with the Sultan's First Secretary, and of confidential information he obtained at the Porte respecting the steps contemplated by His Imperial Majesty in regard to Armenian reforms.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 289.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

IN accordance with your instructions, I called on the Sultan's First Secretary, Tahsin Bey, and desired him to convey to the Sultan that "the Ambassador, having heard that a counter-project was being prepared, thought it right to take the opportunity yesterday of reminding the Grand Vizier and the Foreign Minister that the reform proposals were presented by the three Powers as the minimum of what was considered necessary, and of warning them that it was the firm determination of Her Majesty's Government not to agree to any modifications which would affect the principles of the proposals or weaken the force of the guarantees for their execution, although they would be ready to authorize him to discuss minor details of the "Projet de Réformes" with the Sultan's Ministers; that, further, the Ambassador had this morning received a telegram from Lord Kimberley approving the above language, and stating that the consequences of the refusal of the proposals may be most serious."

The First Secretary at once sent in the message, and I returned to the Porte, where I told Saïd Pasha of the above communication. He had just arrived from the Palace, and my information leads me to believe that a counter-project was decided on; at any rate, he said, "You have spoilt the whole business." I said that if the counter-project was a bad one it would be advisable to tear it up at once, as no modification of principles could be accepted, and that the Sultan had better know this at once.

Whilst I was with him his Excellency was hurriedly summoned to the Palace. After dinner Saïd Pasha sent for me to the Palace, and spoke to me as I reported to your Excellency, and as you telegraphed last night to Lord Kimberley.

It appears that the communication was sent in to the Sultan just in time to prevent an answer to the proposals which would have been totally unacceptable.

Inclosure 2 in No. 289.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I WAS unable to see the Foreign Minister at the Porte yesterday, he being in Council with the Grand Vizier and other Ministers on Armenian reforms. I learned, most confidentially, that when the Sultan received your message on Saturday he was much surprised, the Foreign Minister not having reported your Excellency's words to them of Friday.

His Majesty sent for the two Ministers, and they were interrogated. They denied having received any communication from you, and added that you had wished to talk to them on the Armenian reforms, but, being a "jour de fête" they had avoided the conversation.

I also learned that no answer would be given until Friday, and that it would probably contain considerable modifications.

As Bairam begins Sunday or Monday, and lasts four days, the answer, if not given at the time promised, may be delayed until the end of next week.

I sent to Saïd Pasha the following message: "I have duly communicated to the Ambassador the message your Excellency confided to me on Saturday evening at Yildiz, and I am now instructed to reiterate to your Excellency that time presses, and

if the Ambassador has any advice to tender, it is that a favourable answer should be given at the earliest opportunity."

Said Pasha accepted the communication, and reported it to the Palace.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

May 28, 1895.

No. 290.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 3, 1895.)

(No. 350.) *Constantinople, May* 29, 1895.

My Lord,

ON receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 191 of the 18th instant, I at once made inquiries at the French Embassy, as directed by your Lordship, and have the honour to inclose copy of the reply which has been received in regard to the attack on the French priest at Tokat.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 290.

M. de Margerie to Mr. Eliot.

Ambassade de France, Constantinople, le 29 *Mai*, 1895.

Mon cher Eliot,

LE Patriarche Arménien nous avait également remis ce rapport du 19 Mars, sur les événements de Tokat, dont vous avez extrait le passage relatif au Dr. Chartron.

Nous n'avions eu aucune connaissance de l'incident du prêtre et nous avions aussitôt demandé des informations à notre Vice-Consul à Sivas, ainsi qu'à nos missionnaires Jésuites de Tokat.

Il résulte de leurs lettres que l'incident relaté dans la pièce du Patriarcat n'est pas exact.

Le seul incident auquel les Pères Jésuites aient été mêlés est le suivant.

Quelques enfants Turcs ont jeté des pierres sur les fenêtres du couvent. Un autre a menacé un Père. Ils ont été arrêtés par ordre du Vali, et, depuis, la situation de notre Mission n'a pas été troublée.

L'Ambassade avait signalé ces faits, comme tant d'autres, à la Porte, et, depuis, les enfants Turcs de Tokat se sont tenus tranquilles.

Bien à vous,

(Signé) P. DE MARGERIE.

No. 291.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 3.)

(No. 172.) *Vienna, May* 30, 1895.

My Lord,

IN accordance with the instructions conveyed in your Lordship's despatch to Mr. Barrington No. 58 of the 8th instant, I yesterday expressed to Count Goluchowski the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the language employed by Baron Calice in regard to the Armenian reforms in his recent interview with the Sultan.

Count Goluchowski, in making a courteous reply, observed that he had so much business of more urgent character to attend to that he had not hitherto occupied himself at all with the Armenian question.

Count Kálnoky having called upon me the day before yesterday, I took advantage of the opportunity to make the same communication to him, your Lordship's despatch having been written when his Excellency was still in office, and the message in fact being addressed to him.

His Excellency said that from what has been recently spoken and written in England he feared that there were many people who are determined upon making the continuance of the accord between the three Powers in regard to the Armenian question as difficult as possible.

I have, &c.

(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 292.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(*Received June* 3.)

(Confidential.) *Admiralty, June* 1, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter of to-day, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, a copy of a telegram, dated to-day, dispatched to the Senior Naval Officer at Suez.

I am, &c.

(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 292.

Admiralty to British Naval Officer, Suez.

(Telegraphic.) *Admiralty, June* 1, 1895.

"PIQUE" and "Dolphin" to proceed at once to Jeddah, and communicate with Consul.

Acknowledge receipt, and report action taken.

No. 293.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 3.)

(No. 217.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 3, 1895, 2 A.M.

THE Sultan's answer to the reform proposals is contained in a Turkish document which Munir Bey brought at 2 A.M. this morning.

I hear that most of our demands are rejected.

We shall meet to examine it to-morrow.

No. 294.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 3.)

(No. 219.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 3, 1895, 11·55 A.M.

THE French Embassy have received the following identic telegram from the Delegates at Moush:—

"L'interrogatoire de Mourad étant terminé et la Commission d'Enquête refusant définitivement de convoquer les témoins que nous avons indiqués en dernier lieu, nous avons clôturé l'enquête, conformément aux ordres de vos Excellences. La Commission nous a répondu qu'il y avait encore des points à éclaircir et que d'ailleurs elle n'avait pas d'instructions à cet effet. Nous allons procéder à l'interrogatoire des témoins dont il est parlé ci-dessus.

(Signé) "PELVALSKY.
"SHIPLEY.
"VILLERET."

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No. 295.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 220.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 3, 1895, 7·45 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 217, sent at 2 A.M. this morning, I have the honour to inform your Lordship that the reply of the Sultan to our reform proposals refuses all the proposed guarantees, the High Commissioner, the Commission of Control, the veto on Valis. The points taken from Aristarchi are, with some exceptions, accepted, and the reply states that they will be extended to all the provinces of the Ottoman Empire. The admission of Christians to the Administration is limited to the number proportionate to the total of Christians and Mussulmans in each vilayet; the provisional Councils-General are refused, and also the proposed reforms of the Tribunals, gendarmerie, and police.

The reply does not accept our proposals as to return of emigrants, Judicial Commissions, amnesty, reparation of victims of massacres, inspection of prisons, or provisions for Armenians in other provinces.

Nothing is said as to taxation or finances, and I am sending a copy of the reply to your Lordship by to-morrow's post.

I met the Russian and French Ambassadors this afternoon. We intend to decline any discussion with the Turkish Government until we receive instructions, and we decided to send our Dragomans to inform the Sultan that as, in our personal opinion, the answer of His Majesty does not concede the guarantees nor admit the principles of the project of reforms drawn up by the three Powers, it cannot serve as a basis of discussion between the Ambassadors and the Ottoman Government, and that we have consequently referred His Majesty's reply to our respective Governments.

No. 296.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 3.)

(No. 221.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 3, 1895.*

YESTERDAY I received the following telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah:—

"There is a revolutionary movement on foot among the Bedouins of the Herab tribe according to information given yesterday by the Turkish Naval Pasha, Acting Governor of Jeddah, to the French Consul.

"The tribe declare that cholera has been introduced into the country by the Sanitary authorities, and have threatened to attack Jeddah and destroy the new hospital which is being built, as well as the large refuge at Mecca for pilgrims.

"The chief authorities have conceded the demands of the Bedouins, and have ordered the building operations to be stopped; and, with a view to restoring tranquillity, it is even suggested that what has already been built should be destroyed.

"The Pasha says that he cannot guarantee public security in the near future, and admits that the situation is very grave."

No. 297.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 211.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 3, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 326 of the 21st ultimo, relative to the question of securing the safety, after the departure of the European Delegates from Moush, of the Armenian witnesses who have given evidence before the Commission of Inquiry.

Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the joint action taken to attain this object by your Excellency and the Ambassadors of France and Russia at Constantinople.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 298.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 213.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 3, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegram No. 202 of the 30th ultimo, reporting the forcible entry by Turkish police officers of the premises occupied at Moush by the foreign Delegates attached to the Commission of Inquiry, and the course pursued in the matter by your Excellency in conjunction with your French and Russian colleagues.

Her Majesty's Government approve the measures which have been taken with a view to obtaining satisfaction from the Turkish Government for these unjustifiable proceedings.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 299.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 214.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 3, 1895.*

I HAVE received your telegrams Nos. 199 and 201 of the 30th instant, reporting the Sultan's request for a further delay in the reply to the scheme of Armenian reforms now under His Majesty's consideration, and the answer which, jointly with the French Ambassador, you are returning to this communication.

The action taken by your Excellency in this matter has the approval of Her Majesty's Government.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 300.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 61.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, June 4, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 97 of the 3rd instant.

In conversation with me this afternoon, Prince Lobanoff, speaking very openly about Armenia, said he had never looked upon the presentation of the scheme of reforms as an ultimatum to the Sultan, or considered that, in the event of the Sultan declining to accept it or making counter-proposals, the Ambassadors would be justified in using threatening language. Russia would certainly not join in any coercive measures, and M. de Nélidoff had therefore been instructed to send home the full text of the Sultan's reply, and to take no further steps until he had received instructions.

His Excellency expresses the hope that your Lordship will consult him with regard to any measures that may become necessary after consideration of the reply of the Sultan; in no circumstances, however, will the Russian Government adopt coercive measures or consent to the creation in Asia Minor of a district in which the Armenians should have exceptional privileges, and which would constitute the nucleus of an independent kingdom of Armenia, such being evidently the object the Armenian Committees have in view.

No. 301.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 221.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 4, 1895, 11·30 P.M.*

I HAVE, in concert with my colleagues, sent the following telegram to Mr. Shipley; it refers to my telegram to your Lordship No. 219 of yesterday:—

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"It appears from your joint telegram of the 2nd instant, that the Commission has been declared closed by you and your colleagues.

"If this is so you have somewhat exceeded your instructions.

"The President is the proper person to close the Commission, and should he persist in continuing its labours after you have advised him to the contrary, you should still be present at the sittings and keep the Embassies informed of what passes."

No. 302.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 225.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 4, 1895, 10·15 A.M.*

I HAVE the honour to report, with reference to my telegram No. 205 of the 31st ultimo, that the men who were arrested after having crossed the Persian frontier are reported by Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van to have been sent to Constantinople.

No. 303.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 4.)

(No. 226.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 4, 1895.*

JEDDAH incident.

The Acting Kaimakam has given the Porte the names of the offenders who, he says, will be arrested when the Grand Shereef arrives.

He adds that the outrage took place about half-an-hour's distance outside the town.

No. 304.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 61.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 4, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 224 of to-day, repeating one which you have addressed to Mr. Shipley on the question of the continued attendance of the Delegates at the sittings of the Sassoon Commission.

I concur in the terms of your instruction to Mr. Shipley.

No. 305.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 62.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 4, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 220 of yesterday, communicating the substance of the Sultan's reply to the scheme of reforms for the Armenian provinces.

Before coming to a decision in the matter, Her Majesty's Government must await the receipt of your despatch inclosing the text of the reply, and I should be glad to be informed of your Excellency's views as to the further movements of the Mediterranean Squadron which has arrived at Beyrout.

No. 306.

*The Earl of Kimberley to the Marquis of Dufferin.**

(No. 77.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 4, 1895*

I HAVE repeated to you Sir P. Currie's telegrams Nos. 221, 222, and 223 of yesterday, relative to the attack on British, French, and Russian Consular officers at Jeddah.

I request you to ascertain the views of the Minister for Foreign Affairs on the situation at Jeddah, and to inform his Excellency that we are sending a second-class cruiser of 3,600 tons and a sloop of 900 tons to that port.

No. 307.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 215.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 4, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 327 of the 21st ultimo, relative to the complaint made by Dr. Dillon, correspondent of the "Daily Telegraph," of having been detained at Kentek, on the Turkish frontier, and prevented from passing over into Russian territory.

Judging by the papers which accompany your despatch, Dr. Dillon's treatment does not, in my opinion, appear to have been such as to justify him in claiming compensation, and I concur in your Excellency's proposal to take no action in regard to his application for reimbursement of his expenses.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 308.

The Earl of Kimberley to the Archbishop of Canterbury.

My Lord Archbishop, *Foreign Office, June 4, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Grace's letter of the 27th ultimo, inclosing a communication from the Rev. A. Edington relative to the hardships experienced by the Assyrian Christians in the Turkish dominions at the hands of the Kurds and the Government officials, and expressing the hope that the Assyrians may benefit equally with the Armenians under the proposed reforms.

I have the honour to state, in reply, that the scheme of reforms which has been recommended to the Sultan by the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France, and Russia at Constantinople, is intended to apply to all the Christian subjects of the Sultan in the Eastern provinces of Asiatic Turkey, including the district of Hekkiari.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 309.

Foreign Office to Treasury.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 4, 1895.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit to you the accompanying copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,† suggesting the appointment of Military Vice-Consuls in the Armenian provinces of Turkey, for a limited period, to watch over the execution of reforms which are being urged upon the Government of the Sultan by Great Britain, France, and Russia. Sir P. Currie proposes

* Also to Sir F. Lascelles (No. 109). † No. 207*.

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that four of these officers should be appointed in the first instance, to be increased to six if this should subsequently be found necessary.

With every desire to avoid additional expenditure, Lord Kimberley feels that these appointments will be absolutely necessary on grounds both of humanity and policy, and he cannot therefore do otherwise than recommend the adoption of Sir P. Currie's proposals. Following the analogy of 1879, when Military Consuls were appointed in Anatolia to assist in carrying out the details of the arrangements connected with the Anglo-Turkish Convention of 4th June, 1878, Lord Kimberley would propose that each of the officers to be appointed should receive a salary of 500*l.* a-year, in addition to their actual expenses for travelling, dragomans, and other necessary charges, and I am, in view of the urgency of the case, to express the hope that their Lordships will not refuse their assent to this expenditure.

It will be seen that Sir P. Currie mentions Bitlis, Sivas, Kharput, and Adana, as the points at which the Military Vice-Consuls should be stationed; but the exigencies of the situation may render a different distribution desirable, and his Lordship would propose to leave the details to be settled by his Excellency in the exercise of his discretion.

An estimate is being prepared of the probable annual expense of these appointments. Roughly speaking, it is calculated that the total amount, including salaries, will be about 3,600*l.* a-year.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 310.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 5.)

Downing Street, June 4, 1895.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Marquess of Ripon to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, received on the 1st instant, inclosing a paraphrase of a telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, reporting that four boats from Cyprus, carrying fire-arms, attempted to land on the coast between Latakia and Alexandretta; and I am to state, for Lord Kimberley's information, that a copy will be sent to the High Commissioner of Cyprus for his observations. I am, however, at the same time, to inclose a copy of a despatch from the High Commissioner (to whom your former letter was sent), from which it would appear that it is hardly possible that any very large export of arms and ammunition can be carried on at present from Cyprus, and in which the High Commissioner observes that there is no sufficient reason for believing that there are agents in the island who have undertaken to supply arms and ammunition to the Armenians.

I am, &c.
(Signed) JOHN BRAMSTON.

Inclosure in No. 310.

Sir W. Sendall to the Marquess of Ripon.

(Confidential.)

Government House, Cyprus, May 21, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE not thought it necessary to send a telegraphic reply to your Lordship's Confidential despatch of the 3rd May, as there seems to be no sufficient reason for believing that there are agents in Cyprus who have undertaken to supply arms and ammunition in aid of supposed revolutionary movements in Armenia.

2. I am informed, in reply to inquiries, which have been made confidentially, that the stock of gunpowder in Cyprus was never so low as it is at present, there not being a sufficient amount to supply the ordinary local consumption, and no powder is known to be on its way or to be expected here at present.

3. During the year that is past there were considerable removals of gunpowder (thirty or forty barrels at a time) from the Government store at Larnaca, which Mr. Taylor believes to have been intended for smuggling into the coasts of Syria, but there have been no clearances lately, and there is no stock from which supplies could be made in the manner and for the purpose suggested in the correspondence forwarded

with your Lordship's despatch. The whole quantity of gunpowder imported in any year recently has not exceeded 200 cwt.

4. With respect to arms, it is not believed that any appreciable number could be found available for the suggested purpose. The import consists merely of a few shot-guns of a cheap quality every year, and it is the opinion of those whom I have consulted upon the subject that even if there are in Cyprus persons who are prepared to undertake a commission such as is referred to in Consul Barnham's letter, there are not to be found here either arms or ammunition in any quantity sufficient to furnish supplies to the Armenian Revolutionary Committees.

5. That the villagers in the locality mentioned, which is in the part of the Syrian coast nearest to Cyprus, have from to time to time obtained gunpowder smuggled over in small quantities is very probable, and this may have given rise to the statements which have reached the Consul at Aleppo.

I have, &c.
(Signed) WALTER J. SENDALL,
High Commissioner.

No. 311.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 5.)

(No. 227.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 5, 1895, 10 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 219 of the 3rd instant, Mr. Shipley now telegraphs that the Commission is not actually closed. What the Delegates stated to the Commission was, that the examination of Mourad having terminated, and the Commission having refused to hear the witnesses referred to in their joint telegram of the 25th May (repeated to your Lordship in my telegram No. 190 of the 25th May), they, in accordance with the instructions received from their Embassies, declared the inquiry closed as regarded themselves. They had, however, not refused to attend the sittings of the Commission, and as the French Delegate has informed his Ambassador to-day, the Delegates are ready to attend again to-morrow to discuss a Report on which the Commission desires to have their opinion.

The Delegates based their action on the formal instructions telegraphed to the French Delegate from his Embassy on the 20th May that he should close the inquiry on the contingency above mentioned.

No. 312.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 5.)

(No. 228. Secret.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 5, 1895.*

I HAVE consulted Colonel Chermside with reference to the last paragraph of your Lordship's telegram No. 62 of the 4th June, and I would suggest that, with the view of producing the greatest moral effect upon the Sultan, the fleet should, after spending a week at Beyrout, visit Alexandretta, Marmorice, and Mytilene. Cyprus is omitted, as it is important that there should be a change in the programme originally laid down.

Smyrna and Tenedos would not produce the same effect, as they are normal places of call for the squadron. Alexandretta is chosen as being unusual, and the nearest point to the Armenian provinces. Mytilene is near the Dardanelles, and would be a strategical possession of great value at our mercy.

To-morrow I am dispatching a special messenger with a Report by Colonel Chermside dealing with Mytilene, Jeddah, Crete, St. Jean d'Acre, Bussorah, and the Dardanelles, and generally on the steps that might be adopted should it be found necessary to have recourse to forcible measures.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE, LONDON

No. 313.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 5.)

(No. 230.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 5, 1895, 12·15 P.M.*

LANDING of arms at Suedia.

With reference to my telegram No. 198 of the 30th May, Mr. Barnham telegraphed yesterday that his telegram of the 30th May was based upon an official telegram from the Governor of Antioch which is now contradicted. There was no actual seizure of arms. He has informed Cyprus, and will send full report.

No. 314.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 5.)

(No. 231.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 5, 1895, 7:30 P.M.*

FOLLOWING with reference to my telegram No. 220 of the 3rd June:—

In accordance with the Sultan's orders, Said Pasha has paid me two visits, and on both occasions attempted to induce me to enter into a discussion on the terms of His Imperial Majesty's answer to the reform proposals.

I positively refused to do so in accordance with the course agreed upon with the French and Russian Ambassadors.

Beyond this fact there was nothing in the conversation of sufficient interest to be worth repeating to your Lordship.

I have communicated what passed to my French and Russian colleagues, who entirely concur in my language.

Said Pasha has not seen either of them, the former having been unable to receive his Excellency, and the latter being at his country house at Bayalderé.

The consequences which may follow upon the refusal of the plan of reforms are evidently causing the Sultan some anxiety, and he may possibly withdraw it and substitute a favourable reply.

However, it is not possible for any one to foretell with any certainty what steps His Imperial Majesty may decide to take.

No. 315.

Armenian Relief Fund to Foreign Office.—(Received June 6.)

(Private.)
Sir, *3, Essex Court, Temple, London, June 5, 1895.*

IN reply to your note of to-day, the Committee would be glad to know if the reports received by his Excellency Sir Philip Currie confirm applications made for aid from the Armenian Relief Fund from the Provinces of Van and Bitlis. We should prefer to send money to the British Consuls direct rather than intrust it to United States' missionaries, who have volunteered to distribute relief. But before making remittances, it is desired to know from Her Majesty's Ambassador (1) in what parts there is pressing need of relief; (2) if the British Consuls would be permitted to distribute money sent for purchase of bread and clothing, &c.; and (3) whether Sir Philip Currie is in a position to recommend the distribution of relief to the survivors of the Sassoon massacre.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD ATKIN,
Honorary Treasurer.

No. 316.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.—(Received June 6.)

Downing Street, June 5, 1895.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you, for the information of the Earl of Kimberley, with reference to the letter from this Department of the 4th instant, a copy of a telegram from the High Commissioner of Cyprus, on the subject of the export of arms from Cyprus for Armenia.

I am, &c.
(Signed) R. H. MEADE.

Inclosure in No. 316.

Sir W. Sendall to the Marquess of Ripon.

(Telegraphic.) *(Received Colonial Office), June 4, 1895.*

REFERRING to my Confidential despatch [of] 21st May, I have received further report [on] subject. If any arms or ammunition have been landed on coast in boats belonging to this country, they must have been transferred from ship at sea. Of this there is great probability. Despatch follows by mail.

No. 317.

The Marquis of Dufferin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 7.)

(No. 182.)
Paris, June 6, 1895.

My Lord,

IN accordance with the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram No. 77 of the 4th June, I informed M. Hanotaux that it was the intention of Her Majesty's Government to dispatch to Jeddah a 2nd class cruiser of 3,600 tons, as well as a sloop of 900 tons.

His Excellency told me that there was already a small French vessel in the Red Sea, which had been instructed to repair to Jeddah, and that a French cruiser would be sent thither with the utmost dispatch from the Mediterranean.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND AVA.

No. 318.

Anglo-Armenian Association to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 7.)

My Lord, *3, Essex Court, Temple, London, June 6, 1895.*

WITH reference to previous representations addressed to your Lordship relative to the denial of justice to the Christian subjects of the Porte, I am directed to communicate to your Lordship the following representation from the Anglo-Armenian Association for the information of Her Majesty's Government.

The Council, whilst reserving for the present any criticism on the minor details of the Memorandum and project of reforms in Turkish Armenia submitted by the Russian, French, and British Ambassadors to the Sultan on the 11th ultimo, considers that the scheme falls short of the essential requirements of the case by reason of the absence of definite provisions for adequate and continuous European control, and that sufficient guarantees for the execution of the proposed reforms can best be secured by the appointment, without delay, of a permanent High Commissioner for Eastern Asiatic Turkey, who shall neither be an Ottoman subject nor a present official of the Porte, and who shall be directly responsible to the Powers.

The Council venture to express an earnest hope that it may still be possible for Her Majesty's Government to induce the Governments of Russia and France to amend the scheme on the vital point of European control.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD ATKIN,
Honorary Secretary.

No. 318 A.

Treasury to Foreign Office.

Treasury Chambers, June 7, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE laid before the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury Sir Percy Anderson's letter of the 4th instant, forwarding a despatch in which Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople recommends the appointment of four (or, if found necessary, six) Military Vice-Consuls in the Armenian provinces of Turkey for a limited period to watch over the reforms which are been urged upon the Government of the Sultan by Great Britain, France, and Russia.

As recommended by the Earl of Kimberley, my Lords sanction the appointment of four such officers, with a salary of 500*l.* a-year each, in addition to their actual expenses for travelling, dragomans, and other necessary charges.

Their Lordships note that the total cost is reckoned roughly at 3,600*l.* per annum, and await the further estimate promised.

They offer no objection to the proposal that full discretion should be granted to Sir Philip Currie as to the stations to be assigned to the Vice-Consuls, the posts at present provisionally proposed being Bitlis, Sivas, Kharput, and Adana. My Lords trust that the expense may be met out of savings on the Diplomatic and Consular Vote generally.

I am, &c.

(Signed) G. S. RYDER.

No. 318 B.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received June 7.)

(Confidential.)

Admiralty, June 7, 1895.

Sir,

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram dated the 7th instant, from the Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's ship "Pique."

I am, &c.

(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 318 B.

Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's Ship "Pique" to Admiralty.

Jeddah, June 7, 1895.

(Telegraphic.)

CONSUL states attack on town by Arabs possible, and wishes for ships to remain until after departure of pilgrims—about five days. Town quiet; excitement amongst pilgrims prevailing on account of sanitary requirements. Town healthy. Very hot. "Dolphin" arrived.

No. 319.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 950.)

Constantinople, June 4, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 247, Confidential, of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith translation of the reply of the Sultan to the proposed scheme of Armenian Reforms which was presented to His Imperial Majesty on the 11th ultimo.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 319.

Reply of His Majesty the Sultan to the Proposed Scheme of Armenian Reforms.

(Traduction.)

LE projet de réformes administratives des vilayets présenté à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan par leurs Excellences les Ambassadeurs, a fait l'objet d'une étude des plus attentives.

1. Le principal désir et les intentions du Sultan étant de faire accroître et développer d'une manière équitable la prospérité de tout son Empire et de ses sujets, Sa Majesté Impériale a jugé convenable de ne point restreindre l'application de ces réformes administratives à une seule partie de son Empire, mais d'en faire bénéficier tous les vilayets. — Extension of reforms to the whole Empire.

2. La plupart des points contenus dans le dit projet étant conformes aux dispositions du Règlement sur les vilayets, contenu dans le premier volume du "Destour," p. 680, et daté du 7 Djemazi-ul-Akhir, 1281, ainsi qu'aux dispositions du Règlement sur l'Administration Générale des Vilayets, daté du 29 Cheval, 1287, contenu dans le même volume du "Destour," p. 625, Sa Majesté Impériale, afin de pouvoir maintenir le principe de centralisation, veut assurer l'application de ces dispositions, sauf de celles qui ont trait au Conseil-Général, et décide que l'on exécute celles des dispositions qui n'ont pas été encore appliquées. Toutefois, comme dans les Règlements existants il n'y a pas de mention concernant le maintien pendant cinq ans des Valis à leurs postes, ni concernant les Conseils permanents à être formés sous la présidence respective des Valis, Mutessarifs, et Caïmacams, les attributions que l'on voudrait confier à ces fonctionnaires sont déjà comprises dans les attributions régulières des Conseils Administratifs. Ces Conseils ne sont pas dès lors matériellement nécessaires. — Maintains principle of centralization. Refusal of Councils-General and of five years' appointments of Valis.

3. En ce qui touche les Articles concernant la formation de Tribunaux, de la gendarmerie, et de la police, ils ne sont pas conformes aux dispositions des Lois et Règlements en vigueur. Mais des Inspecteurs judiciaires seront nommés. On augmentera la gendarmerie et la police dans les cazas afin de contrôler d'une façon permanente les Tribunaux et les prisons, d'assurer la prompte expédition des procès et l'ordre dans les nahiés et les villages. Il en sera détaché un nombre suffisant pour les affecter au centre des nahiés. On prendra toutes les mesures voulues pour soumettre à une discipline régulière les tribus nomades et dans chaque localité, où il existe un Tribunal de Première Instance, on y instituera aussi, en cas de besoin, un Tribunal Correctionnel de Première Instance. — Refuses reforms of Tribunals. Gendarmerie. Police. Measures respecting Kurds. Correctional Tribunal of First Instance.

4. Il a été décidé de nommer et d'employer dans les postes administratifs, dans la gendarmerie et la police, indépendamment des Musulmans, des sujets Ottomans non-Musulmans habitants de l'Empire, dans la proportion du chiffre total des populations Musulmanes et non-Musulmanes habitant dans chaque vilayet. — Refusal of one-third Christians functions.

Considérations concernant le Mémorandum.

1. Sous le point de vue de la science ethnographique, il est recommandé d'amoindrir le nombre des vilayets Asiatiques, afin que les différentes classes des habitants soient groupées ethnographiquement dans un vilayet. Cependant, en vue de faciliter les procédés du Gouvernement, quant à ce qui regarde le choix des employés, et l'exécution de ses propres devoirs, le mode actuel de la formation des eyalets a été une fois adopté. Or, le changement proposé, loin de faciliter l'administration du pays, la rendra, au contraire, beaucoup plus difficile, et même impraticable du point de vue de la science ethnographique, attendu que dans chaque contrée les habitants sont mélangés. — Reduction of vilayets refused.

2. Il est dit dans le Mémorandum que dans le choix et la nomination des Gouverneurs avis soit donné aux Ambassades d'une manière officieuse. Cependant, comme il est arrêté que les Gouverneurs-Généraux soient élus parmi ceux qui se sont distingués en capacité, et que ceux qui sont considérés comme incapables de faire l'application des réformes soient changés, les Ambassadeurs admettront naturellement que la communication officieuse demandée serait dérogatoire à l'indépendance du Gouvernement Impérial garantie par les Traités. — Veto on Valis refused.

3. Une partie des Arméniens qui étaient emprisonnés pour délits politiques, et qui n'ont pas été convaincus de crimes ordinaires par les Tribunaux, ont déjà obtenu le pardon Impérial, et, comme il a été déjà décidé, la mise en liberté proclamement de ceux des Arméniens dont le pardon avait été demandé également, satisfaction est donnée sur ce point. — Amnesty already given.

Return of emigrants and restoration of property refused.

4. On recommande le rappel des Arméniens qui administrativement avaient été expulsés ou qui avaient été éloignés de leur patrie, ainsi que ceux qui par peur ont émigré en pays étrangers et que les immeubles et les terres qui leur appartenaient leur soient restitués. Or, parmi ces individus il y en a qui ne sont pas sujets de la Porte et d'autres qui sont reconnus comme nuisibles: Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan permettra le retour de ceux dont on dit qu'ils avaient été expulsés et éloignés de leur pays, ou qui avaient déjà émigré en pays étrangers, après que leur identité, leur nationalité, et leur conduite seront examinées, et qui en pareil cas fourniront des garanties de leur future bonne conduite. D'un autre côté, comme les droits de propriété de tout sujet du Gouvernement Impérial sont garantis par la loi, on ne voit pas la raison de la demande de la restitution des immeubles aux individus susmentionnés.

"Commissions Judiciaires" refused.

5. Cet Article concerne l'envoi d'une Commission à chaque vilayet, pour interroger les personnes arrêtées et qui sont sous jugement, ainsi que d'accélérer le jugement des crimes et des délits ordinaires.

En effet, il a été toujours le désir de Sa Majesté que les procès et tous les procédés judiciaires soient poursuivis sans relâche, et il est naturellement nécessaire que les mesures à prendre ne dérogent à la procédure établie. Par conséquent, la compétence qu'on veut attribuer aux Commissions en question ne saurait concorder avec la procédure judiciaire en vigueur. En outre, les Inspecteurs, dont un Musulman et un non-Musulman, qui seront nommés pour chaque province avec mission d'accélérer le jugement de tous les procès, rendent naturellement inutile la nomination de pareilles Commissions.

Inspection of prisons by high functionaries refused.

6. Cet Article concerne la nomination de préposés pour l'inspection des prisons. Or, comme ce devoir est compris dans la mission des Inspecteurs susmentionnés, il n'y a plus nécessité d'envoyer à cet effet d'autres fonctionnaires.

High Commissioner refused.

7. Cet Article concerne l'envoi d'un Haut Commissaire aux provinces Asiatiques pour surveiller la mise en exécution des réformes; cependant, attendu que la fidèla exécution des réformes appartient au Gouverneur qui en a la responsabilité et qui sere choisi parmi les plus capables, et attendu que la Commission qui a été établi au Ministère de l'Intérieur est investie aussi de la mission de faire de pareilles enquêtes, et d'envoyer immédiatement un ou plusieurs Inspecteurs partout où la nécessité l'exige, soit pour la formation du vilayet, soit pour quelque question de l'administration en prenant les susdits Inspecteurs dans le Département auquel appartient la question, on ne voit pas la nécessité de l'envoi d'un Haut Commissaire.

Commission of Control refused.

8. Cet Article concerne la formation d'une Commission permanente composée de six membres Musulmans et non-Musulmans avec un Président choisi parmi les hauts fonctionnaires civils ou militaires, et qui se réunira au moins une fois par mois à la Sublime Porte. Cette Commission aura les attributions d'inspecter l'exacte et fidèle exécution des Règlements, de dénoncer à qui de droit ceux des employés qui agissent dans l'administration du pays contrairement à la loi, et ceux qui ne remplissent pas leur devoir dans le temps voulu, d'entendre les plaintes des habitants, d'examiner les Rapports qui leur seront présentés de la part des Chefs de Communautés, de recevoir les communications des Ambassades qui leur seraient faites en cas de nécessité par le moyen de leurs Drogmans respectifs, d'envoyer un ou plusieurs de ses membres pour faire une enquête dans une province et d'avoir le droit de correspondre avec les Départements de l'État ainsi qu'avec les Gouverneurs-Généraux. Or, le recours des Chefs de Communautés en ce qui regarde leurs affaires religieuses est le Ministère des Cultes.

Quant aux affaires ordinaires intérieures, leur transaction entre la Sublime Porte et les Drogmans ne saurait que produire des controverses fréquentes, et il est à craindre qu'elle n'ait pour résultat de créer une question politique et des difficultés désagréables entre la Sublime Porte et les Ambassades. En dehors de ces inconvénients, MM. les Ambassadeurs savent bien que l'indépendance du Gouvernement Impérial a été garantie par les Traités de Paris et de Berlin, et spécialement dans le Traité de Paris il est clairement établi que les Puissances, ni seules ni en commun, n'interviendront dans les affaires de la Turquie, et cette clause a été confirmée et corroborée dans le Traité de Berlin.

Par conséquent, MM. les Ambassadeurs voudront bien admettre que le Gouvernement Impérial ne peut que repousser l'obligation proposée dans le 8e Article de recevoir des communications par le moyen des Drogmans. En outre, les attributions de la Commission d'Enquête qui sera établie dans le Ministère de l'Intérieur étant de nature à produire le résultat désiré, la nomination d'une autre Commission n'est point nécessaire.

Reparation to victims refused.

9. Il est suggeré de faire une enquête pour constater les pertes qu'ont subi des Arméniens dans les événements de Sassoun et de Talori afin de leur accorder des ndemnités. Sa Majesté Impériale a donné jusqu'à présent pour eux la somme de £T. 15,000. Cependant, lorsque le Gouverneur du pays rapportera qu'il y a des personnes qui mériteraient la liberalité Impériale elle ne leur manquera pas.

Religious conversions (7).

10. Cet Article concerne la condition à savoir que ceux qui veulent changer leur religion soient âgés de 21 ans, et qu'il ne leur soit accordé le changement avant qu'ils ne soient soumis pendant une semaine à la surveillance de la communauté.

La liberté des religions dans l'Empire se trouve sous la sauvegarde de la loi. Et attendu que le changement de religion est une question de conscience et qu'aucune violence n'est exercée de la part de qui que ce soit à cet égard, la procédure suivie jusqu'à présent est confirmée, et les personnes qui veulent accepter la religion de l'Islam devront être majeures suivant la loi et seront placées dans un local de confiance où il sera accordé pendant une semaine aux Chefs de la Communauté de les visiter.

Armenian privileges (7).

11. On demande l'observation complète des Règlements accordés aux Arméniens en 1863 et des clauses de tous les Bérats qui leur avaient été octroyés. Les procédés du Gouvernement en ce qui concerne les concessions faites, soit aux Arméniens, soit aux autres communautés non-Musulmanes, sont connus par tout le monde, et le Gouvernement Impérial continuera à observer toujours ces concessions.

Armenians in other vilayets refused.

12. Cet Article concerne la nomination d'un Chrétien comme Mouavin du Vali pour la sauvegarde des intérêts des Arméniens qui se trouvent dans les autres provinces Asiatiques de l'Empire, ainsi que l'assimilation de l'Administration des districts de Hatchin et de Zeytoun à celle des six eyalets.

On fait observer qu'attendu qu'il y a des membres laïques et spirituels de la communauté Arménienne dans le Conseil Administratif et dans les Tribunaux Nizamiés, ce serait contraire au Firman Impérial, qui établit l'égalité des sujets de Sa Majesté le Sultan, que d'accorder un privilège spécial aux Arméniens; ce serait provoquer une hostilité entre les communautés, et en outre, les réformes projetées étant basées sur leur application à tous les vilayets de l'Empire en conformité avec les Règlements sur l'administration des vilayets, il n'y a pas lieu de nommer spécialement des Arméniens et de faire l'application des réformes à un ou deux districts spécialement.

Chapter X. Hamidié, refused.

13. Suivant les Règlements et les décisions spéciales concernant les époques de l'instruction militaire des régiments des cavaliers Hamidiés et de l'invitation au service militaire, Sa Majesté confirme de nouveau le Règlement fait par une Commission de l'État-Major, de laquelle Goltz Pacha était membre, d'après lequel ils sont obligés de se soumettre aux ordres qu'ils recevront, soit pour leur instruction, soit pour leur service, à des époques déterminées, ou bien en dehors de ces époques.

Nomad Kurds to be accompanied by a military and a police officer with troops.

14. Les habitants de Mouch et d'Erzeroum et des environs, en vue d'assurer la conservation de leurs troupeaux, ont l'habitude, *ab antiquo*, d'aller pendant la belle saison là où il y a des pâturages et de retourner pendant l'hiver aux districts et aux villages, ceux-ci on ne saurait les appeler nomades, seulement comme il y a des "Achirets" parmi eux qui n'habitent que des tentes, dorénavant le Commandant Militaire de la province fera accompagner "l'Achiret" par un officier ayant à sa suite un nombre suffisant de soldats; et de son côté le Vali enverra avec eux un Commissaire de Police.

Les localités qu'ils traverseront seront désignées d'avance et on aura tous les soins possibles de préserver les habitants de toute spoliation et de tout dommage qui pourraient être entrepris par ces "Achirets." En outre, on aura soin de leur faire observer le règlement général en vigueur sur le port d'armes; d'ailleurs, le Gouvernement Impérial a déjà décidé que ceux des "Achirets" qui sont habitants de tentes fussent fixés, si cela est possible, et dans le cas contraire on désignera leurs localités d'hiver et d'été ainsi que celles de leur passage.

En général il n'est pas vrai de dire que ces "Achirets" sont rien que des nomades.

Chapter XI, [illegible] Tithe-dec[illegible]

15. Le Département du Defter-i-Hakani, en vertu d'un Iradé Impérial, enverra à chaque province un Inspecteur permanent ayant pour mission d'examiner les affaires de propriété immobilière, d'en assurer la propriété, d'empêcher le retard de procédures qui causent des dommages aux habitants, de découvrir et de mettre à la lumière les droits qui sont cachés, et d'agir en conformité des Règlements spéciaux.

Le Gouverneur de la province leur attachera des personnes, Musulmanes ou Chrétiennes, parmi les Notables, qui jouissent de la confiance des habitants et qui ont de l'expérience; et soit le Vali, soit les autres fonctionnaires civils veilleront à ce que l'enquête en question soit faite convenablement et que le but désiré soit atteint.

Note.

Omitted:—
Chapitre VIII. Comité d'Enquête Préliminaire.
Chapitre XII. Perception des Dîmes.
Chapitre XIII. Justice.

Although it is to be presumed that what is taken from "Aristarchi" will be accepted on paper.

No. 320.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(*Received June* 8.)

(Confidential.)

Admiralty, June 7, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to your letter of the 6th June, I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the paraphrase of a telegram, dated this day, from the Admiralty to the Senior Naval Officer at Jeddah.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 320.

Admiralty to Senior Naval Officer at Jeddah.

(Telegraphic.) *Admiralty, June* 7, 1895.

AUSTRO-HUNGARIAN Government ask assistance and protection Bosnian pilgrims arriving Jeddah. Reply as far as Her Majesty's service admits.

No. 321.

Mr. Gosselin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 14.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Berlin, June* 8, 1895, 11·30 A.M.

BARON von MARSCHALL stated to me yesterday his opinion that the dispatch of the Mediterranean fleet to Besika Bay would produce a salutary effect on the Sublime Porte in the matter of agreeing to the proposed Armenian reforms.

No. 322.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 8.)

(No. 232.)

(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 8, 1895, 7·50 P.M.

M. CAMBON has just informed me that the French Consul at Jeddah has telegraphed that the Governor has refused a request made by the Consuls that the authorities at the gates should disarm all Bedouins entering the town. This appears to be a precaution which is commonly adopted when there is excitement, as at present.

The French Ambassador sent his Dragoman to remonstrate at the Porte, and to say that in the event of danger consequent upon this refusal, the French man-of-war would, in order to protect foreigners, have orders to land men.

I would be glad if your Lordship would inform me whether I am authorized to make a communication in the same sense.

No. 323.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 8.)

(No. 234.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 8, 1895, 8·15 P.M.*

I WOULD suggest that the Anglo-Armenian Association should consult Dr. Washburne as to a suitable agent for distribution of relief. I do not think it advisable that a Consular officer, as suggested in your Lordship's telegram No. 63 of the 8th, should undertake this duty, and we have no one to spare for the purpose.

No. 324.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 63.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 8, 1895.*

THE information received from your Excellency as to the distress prevailing among the inhabitants of the Sassoon district has been communicated to the Secretary of the Armenian Relief Fund. He inquires whether permission would be given to the British Consular officers in the Provinces of Van and Bitlis to distribute money for the purchase of bread and clothing.

Do you consider that such an arrangement would be permssible? What other agencies would you suggest for the distribution of relief?

No. 325.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 226.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 8, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 335, Confidential, of the 23rd ultimo, informing me that, in consequence of the insecure state of the districts lying beyond the Jordan, you have thought it unadvisable to support an application made by Major Heber Percy for facilities to visit Kerak.

You also state that under present conditions you are of opinion that it is useless to try and procure redress for an attack recently made by Bedouins in the neighbourhood of Kerak upon Mr. Gray Hill.

In the circumstances described by your Excellency, I concur in your view with regard to both these cases.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 326.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 228.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 8, 1895.*

THE Turkish Ambassador called here to-day and said he was instructed to state that the Sultan was most anxious that there should be no interruption of the friendly relations which had so long existed between the Ottoman Empire and this country, to the maintenance of which His Majesty attached the highest importance.

The answer which had been returned by the Porte to the project of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Asiatic Turkey, had been prepared in great haste in consequence of the pressure for a reply by a certain day. It was, like the communication made to the Porte by the Ambassadors of Great Britain, France, and Russia, an unsigned document, and should not be taken as the final and complete reply. The whole matter was receiving the most earnest consideration by the Sultan and his

No. 327.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 65.) *Foreign Office, June 9, 1895.*

(Telegraphic.) P.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 232 of the 8th instant, relative to affairs at Jeddah.

According to a telegram from the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Pique" at Jeddah, all appears quiet, and he proposes to leave the place on the 11th. The "Dolphin" will remain there. He says Her Majesty's Consul agrees to this arrangement. I think that before joining in the French Ambassador's remonstrance as to disarming of Bedouins we should have a report from our Consul on the subject.

I have telegraphed to him to report and repeat his reply to your Excellency.

Ministers, and in these circumstances his Excellency was desired to express the hope that the instructions to Sir P. Currie would be such as to give time for the full consideration of questions so vitally affecting the interests of Turkey.

I expressed my thanks for the friendly assurances of the Sultan. I could not, however, enter into any discussion on the subject of the answer of the Porte to the project of reforms, the full text of which had only just reached me, until I had been able to consult with my colleagues upon it.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 327.

Foreign Office to Armenian Relief Fund.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 8, 1895.*

IN reply to your letter of yesterday making certain inquiries with regard to the question of relief for the Armenians of Van and Bitlis, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to communicate to you the following information which has been received from Mr. Shipley, the British Delegate attached to the Commission at Moush.

In a despatch dated the 27th April, and received on the 20th ultimo, and in a telegram received on the 3rd instant, he speaks of the great distress, amounting in a great number of cases to abject destitution, among the fugitives from Sassoon, of which he and his colleagues have had many opportunities of convincing themselves from personal observation. A sum of £T. 2,500 had been allocated to the needs of the Sassoonites by the Turkish Government, and an effort was to be made to settle them in their old villages. A Commission, of which two members were to be Armenians, was to be formed for carrying out this decision, and steps were to be taken for the recovery of some of the cattle lost during the recent events. But their most pressing need is said to be for means to till their fields. They have neither the necessary implements nor the seed, and if these are not supplied they may be without food next winter; meanwhile, the inhabitants of the villages of the Moush, Boulanik, and other districts, who have maintained the fugitives during the whole of the past winter, are expecting to be relieved of their burden. Mr. Shipley does not think that a large sum is so much needed as that the distribution should be carefully managed, and he recommends that assistance should be sent to the sufferers independent of the Turkish Relief Fund. A local Committee left for the Semal district towards the end of May with a small sum to assist the villagers in rebuilding their huts, but they declined to rebuild unless they had the means of sowing.

I am to add that Lord Kimberley will consult Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople as to the best methods of distributing any relief that may be forthcoming.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 328.

The Commander of Her Majesty's Ship "Pique" to Admiralty.—(Communicated by Admiralty June 9.)

(Telegraphic.) *Jeddah, June 8, 1895.*

EVERYTHING appears quiet. Unless anything occurs, suggest leaving 11th. Consul agrees.

Request permission omit Hodeidah, extra quarantine. "Dolphin" remains.

Telegraph about Austrians (pilgrims) complied with.

No. 329.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 351.)

Constantinople, June 3, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a paper which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch in regard to the sufferings of Armenians, and the dangers to which they are exposed.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 329.

Paper communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

DANGERS IMMINENTS.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 6 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

LES éventualités les plus terribles menacent les Chrétiens du Vilayet de Bitlis et des provinces environnantes si les Délégués Européens accompagnant la Commission d'Enquête de Sassoun quittaient le pays avant la création d'un état de choses satisfaisant et normal.

Les Turcs et les Kurdes, surexcités par suite de la politique même du Gouvernement, attendent le temps propice pour donner libre cours à leur férocité. Les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement sont animés des mêmes sentiments, et c'est seulement la crainte de châtiments sur des démarches de la part des Représentants des Puissances étrangères, qui les retiennent momentanément.

Les plus graves méfaits et de terribles massacres peuvent avoir lieu si l'on laisse croire un seul instant à ces gens que l'intervention Européenne, en vue de mettre fin à la situation actuelle, était une chose théorique qui s'est terminée sans une protection efficace pour les Chrétiens de l'Asie-Mineure.

Les dangers découlant de cette situation deviennent de plus en plus menaçants à Erzeroum même, et il est urgent de s'adresser à toutes les mesures de précaution possibles pour prévenir des malheurs irrémédiables.

Attaques, Vexations, et Menaces dans le Vilayet d'Erzeroum.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 3 Avril (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

D'après des renseignements de Khenouss les habitants des villages Kurdes de Khassa, de Khantchour, et de Kizil-Ahmed ont présenté, le 1er Mars passé, une Pétition au Caïmacam de Pertavan, accusant les Arméniens des villages de Kaghkik et de Halil-Tchmouh de se préparer à la révolte. Cette dénonciation était provoquée par le Gouvernement même, qui cherchait des prétextes pour justifier de nouvelles mesures de pression contre les Arméniens. En effet, sur cette dénonciation, le Gouvernement a distribué des fusils et des cartouches aux Kurdes susmentionnés, et leur a ordonné de se préparer pour une attaque.

Cette attaque a eu lieu le 17 Mars (v. s.) à 3 heures à la Turque de la nuit. Les Kurdes ont fait une entrée subite dans le village de Kaghkik, et ont livré à la terreur la population par une fusillade très serrée. En même temps, on a mis le feu au fenil de Derderian Sérkiss, et à plusieurs monceaux de fourrages appartenant à des paysans.

Les habitants de Kaghkik n'ont pas même osé de sortir de leurs demeures, mais les Kurdes pénétrant dans plusieurs maisons, les ont saccagées.

L'attaque a duré jusqu'au matin. A l'aube les Kurdes s'étant enfin retirés, les paysans se sont rendus à Khenouss, et ont porté plainte au Caïmacam, mais celui-ci, au lieu de prendre en considération ces plaintes, a envoyé le Capitaine Riza Effendi à Kaghkik, qui a exigé de la population le paiement immédiat de la dîme des moutons de l'année courante.

Les paysans ont répondu que le dénombrement des moutons du village n'ayant pas encore été fait, ils ne pouvaient pas en payer la dîme.

Le Capitaine a exigé alors le paiement sur la base du nombre de moutons existant l'année dernière. Les paysans ont objecté ne posséder cette année que 200 moutons, tandis que l'année passée ils en avaient 900. Aussi, ils ont déclaré qu'il leur était impossible de payer sur la base de l'année écoulée.

Riza Effendi n'a attaché aucune importance à toutes ces paroles. Il a ordonné aux zaptiés de sa suite de battre les Notables du village, et, sur cet ordre, les nommés Kirkor Miuassian, Alo Hiboyan, et Manouk Eloyan recevant la bastonnade, sont tombés évanouis et à demi-morts.

Les pauvres villageois ont donné tout ce qu'ils possédaient pour se sauver de ces mauvais traitements. Manouk Eloyan est malade depuis ce temps, par suite des meurtrissures qu'il avait reçues.

Les habitants Arméniens du village de Halil-Tchmouch ont également subi un traitement analogue.

Le Dimanche, 12 Mars (v. s.) ces paisibles paysans retournaient chez eux après avoir entendu la messe, quand ils ont vu leur village assiégé par une multitude de Kurdes et de gendarmes. Sur l'ordre de Djindo Agha, Commandant dans la cavalerie Hamidié, le Sergent Teyfour s'est jeté sur le nommé Kaspar Serkissian, dont les poings et les pieds ont été liés. D'autres personnes se sont rués sur Mardé Kotchoyan, et l'ont arrêté. Les Kurdes, sous prétexte de chercher des armes, se sont dispersés dans les habitations. Un nommé Serop a été très cruellement battu parce qu'il ne pouvait livrer aux Kurdes son fils, celui-ci ayant émigré en d'autres pays. Le pauvre Serop a été arrêté et conduit à Pertavan, où il a été emprisonné.

En quittant le village, Djindo a crié du haut du toit d'une maison :—

"Giaours infidèles. Voici la fin qui vous attend. Les massacres de Sassoun n'étaient pas suffisants pour vous. Vous en aurez encore de plus cruels. C'est en vain que vous mettez votre espoir dans l'aide de quelques étrangers. Je jure sur la tête du Prophète que personne parmi vous ne restera vivante. Vous serez massacrés encore plus cruellement que les Bulgares."

Comme preuve des dispositions qui règnent chez les Kurdes, nous donnons la traduction d'une lettre adressée aux Arméniens du village de Dounan, par Haydar Feizi Agha Zadé, l'un des Chefs des tribus Kurdes de Tchipran, qui se trouve actuellement emprisonné à Erzeroum :—

"Nous avons appris que les nommés Vélo et Kré Megréyan et Bedros Hovian ne vivent pas en bonne intelligence avec la famille de Halil Agha, qu'ils ne paient pas les redevances féodales établies *ab antiquo* à cette famille, et qu'ils n'en nourrissent pas les femmes et les enfants. Les choses n'iront pas toujours comme à présent. Soyez sûrs que, grâce à Sa Majesté le Sultan, nous serons vite sauvés, et nous retournerons prochainement dans notre pays. Nous saurons alors ce que nous avons à faire. Malheur à vous, quand même si nous mourrions, nous avons assez d'héritiers pour se venger de vous et pour vous réduire à l'extrême misère. N'oubliez pas tout cela et agissez en conséquence.

(Sceau) "HAYDAR FEIZI AGHA ZADÉ."

L'original en Turc de cette lettre se trouve actuellement entre les mains de l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne. Le Samedi-Saint, en plein jour, les Turcs ont saccagé l'église Arménienne du village de Chipak, à six heures de distance d'Erzeroum. Les croix en argent, les vases sacrés, et autres objets ont été enlevés. L'autorité ecclésiastique a porté plainte au Gouverneur-Général, mais aucun résultat n'a été obtenu.

Nouvelles Exactions à Erzeroum.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 15 Avril (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

Comme un exemple des exactions qui se commettent dans la province sous prétexte de la perception des impôts, nous croyons utile de signaler le cas suivant survenu tout dernièrement.

Les percepteurs se rendant, il y a deux jours, au village de Gan, à une demi-heure de distance d'Erzeroum, y ont commis toute espèce de méfaits, et, pour comble de cruauté, ont attaché à une colonne quatre Arméniens, dont les trois étaient des vieillards âgés de 70 ans. Ces pauvres gens ont reçu la bastonnade, dans cette position, durant une heure entière.

Après cette bastonnade les victimes ont été laissées libres, avec menace de plus grands châtiments s'ils ne s'acquittaient pas de leurs dettes d'impôts.

Deux de ces vieillards se trouvent à présent malades. Des plaintes ayant été portées au Vali au sujet de ces cruautés, celui-ci a dépêché un fonctionnaire à Gan pour faire une enquête, mais ce fonctionnaire, au lieu d'établir la vérité, s'est contenté de dresser un procès-verbal démentant les faits, et l'a fait signer au Moukhtar et à l'Imam Turcs du village, et à deux Arméniens, qui ont plus tard déclaré qu'ils avaient apposé leurs signatures par crainte, et que le contenu du procès-verbal était totalement faux.

Les Arméniens battus et torturés sont aussi venus à Erzeroum se plaindre de ces faits au Vali, qui, au lieu de punir les percepteurs coupables, a fait emprisonner les victimes.

L'Affaire de Narman.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 8 Avril (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

Il y a six ans, trois Arméniens ont été tués, après avoir été très cruellement torturés, dans une forêt se trouvant à proximité du district de Narman. L'enquête y relative a prouvé que les auteurs de cet assassinat étaient des Turcs, qui avaient accompagné les victimes jusqu'à l'endroit où elles ont été trouvées mortes.

Un temps assez long s'était écoulé après ces assassinats quand deux habitants Turcs de Narman ont été tués dans un endroit très éloigné des limites des villages Arméniens de Narman; les assassins étaient très probablement les brigands Turcs qui parcouraient ces parages, mais le Gouvernement n'a rien fait pour les découvrir, et a accusé les Arméniens d'avoir tué ces deux Turcs pour se venger de l'assassinat des trois Arméniens précédemment assassinés. Plusieurs habitants Arméniens des villages d'Ekrek, de Véké Khass, et de Kantzatzor (dont le nombre s'est élevé à soixante-trois, y compris deux prêtres), ont été arrêtés et envoyés à la prison centrale d'Erzeroum. L'enquête à laquelle se sont livrées les autorités policière et judiciaire n'a produit aucune preuve à l'hypothèse du Gouvernement, mais les pauvres prisonniers sont restés des années entières dans les cachots. Il est impossible de décrire toutes les tortures, toutes les souffrances que les prisonniers ont subies et que subissent encore dix d'entre eux. Pendant que ces pauvres gens étaient livrés à de cruelles tortures dans les cachots leurs femmes et leurs enfants subissaient toutes sortes d'outrages et de privations. Leurs propriétés étaient saisies, leurs biens et leur bétail volés, leurs foyers incendiés, et sous ces pressions la réunion compacte d'Arméniens qui se trouvait à Narman a été dispersée.

Durant l'enquête le Gouvernement a exprimé l'intention de pendre plusieurs des prisonniers, mais il n'y a pas donné suite.

Le procès résultant de ces faits s'est enfin terminé il y a quelques mois; trente-sept personnes ont été acquittées et dix autres condamnées à diverses peines pour des motifs qui nous sont inconnus.

Pendant la détention préventive seize personnes ne pouvant plus endurer les tortures et les mauvais traitements avaient déjà trouvé la mort.

Voici la liste complète de ces prisonniers:—

1. Le prêtre Der-Stépan	Acquittés.
2. Manouk Ghougassian	
3. Haroutioun Mughakian	
4. Haroutioun Hovanessian	
5. Haroutioun Dzéroonian	
6. Mardiross Topalian	
7. Bagdassar Garabethian	
8. Andon Kévorkian	
9. Kalousd Bédrossian	
10. Haroutioun Tortian	
11. Harpartzoum Ohanessian	
12. Sarkiss Hadjadjelian	
13. Mardiros Keussian	
14. Mardiross Avédissian	
15. Kirkor Avédissian	
16. Paregh Apelian	
17. Avak Lalakerian	
18. Vartan D. Stépanian	
19. Haroutioun Markarian	
20. Vartan Stépanian	
21. Toumass Aghabalyan	
22. Ohanès Vartanian	
23. Manouk Héloian	
24. Hayrabeth Kirkorian	
25. Garabeth Mardirossian	
26. Minass Hovaguimian	
27. Eghia Agopian	Acquittés.
28. Eghia Sarkissian	
29. Ekmn Sarkissian	
30. Kirkor Erémian	
31. Agop Kirkorian	
32. Guiragoss Mardirossian	
33. Hampartzoum Kapriélian	
34. Mardiross Nersessian	
35. Kirkor D. Kirkorian	
36. Ohannès D. Kirkorian	
37. Haroutioun Hovaguimian	
38. Parsik Zourabdjian	Condamnés.
39. Erémia Garabethian	
40. Garabeth Tarpinian	
41. Mardiros Ghazarian	
42. Le prêtre Der-Kirkor	
43. Vartan Tatessian	
44. Sirkiss Eghoyan	
45. Zakar Sarkissian	
46. Bédros Kalemdjian	
47. Arsen Boghossian	

48-62. Quinze personnes mortes dans les prisons pendant leur détention préventive.

Injustice dans les Tribunaux.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 28 Avril (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

Comme une preuve des excès commis par les Tribunaux dans les jugements prononcés contre les Arméniens accusés de prétendus crimes politiques nous croyons utile de signaler le cas suivant.

Le nommé Serkiss Fidanian, domestique au service du Métropolitain *ad interim* de Passin, a été condamné hier à un an de prison par la Cour Pénale d'Erzeroum parce qu'on avait trouvé dans sa maison, lors d'une perquisition, quelques vieux papiers contenant des extraits de livres de géographie et d'histoire qui contenaient le mot "Arménie."

Serkiss Fidanian ne sait ni lire, ni écrire. Il a déclaré devant le Tribunal que les papiers susmentionnés appartenaient à un jeune homme de famille, mort il y a quelque temps. Au surplus, on a prouvé devant le Tribunal que les citations susmentionnées étaient extraites d'un ouvrage scolaire dont l'impression avait été autorisée par le Ministre de l'Instruction Publique.

Tortures dans la Prison de Bitlis.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 3 Avril (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

Nous apprenons, d'après des rapports de sources véridiques arrivés de Bitlis, que le prisonnier Mourad (Hampartzoum Boyadjian) a été torturé de la manière la plus barbare dans la prison de cette ville.

Lors de son transfert à Bitlis Mourad a été mis au secret dans un cachot obscure et humide. On lui a passé un anneau en fer au cou et de pesantes chaînes aux pieds et aux bras; il n'avait pour lit qu'un morceau de vieux paillasson, et pour couverture que ses rares habits déchirés. On ne lui donnait pour toute nourriture qu'un morceau de pain rassis, et quelquefois on oubliait même cette ration pour le torturer par la faim. Cette vie de misère a très vite affaibli son corps, mais il n'a jamais perdu la force d'âme qui a été son soutien dans les cruelles épreuves de sa captivité.

Sur un ordre Mourad a été conduit chez le Gouverneur-Général, qui lui a proposé de signer une déclaration dans le sens suivant:—

"Je regrette d'avoir ajouté foi aux paroles des Puissances étrangères, et surtout du

Gouvernement Anglais, qui m'avaient promis d'importantes rémunérations pécuniaires et des armes et munitions en quantité. C'est croyant à ces promesses que je suis venu en Turquie fomenter des troubles; mais je suis persuadé à présent que l'Angleterre couvrait ses intérêts sous les couleurs de sentiments philanthropiques et d'une protection offerte aux Chrétiens d'Orient. C'est par l'instigation de l'Angleterre que j'ai fomenté ces troubles et fait couler le sang de tant d'Arméniens, qui vivaient tranquillement depuis des siècles sous les auspices et grâce aux bienfaits du Gouvernement Impérial Ottoman."

En même temps que cette déclaration une autre pièce, rédigée en Français (et expédiée très probablement de Constantinople), lui a été présentée, et le Vali lui a proposé d'en reconnaître également l'authenticité.

Mourad a formellement refusé d'apposer sa signature au-dessous de ces pièces, et a protesté contre la conduite du Vali, qui voulait falsifier la vérité.

Toutes les menaces ne pouvant le faire revenir sur son refus, comme un dernier moyen de pression, le Mektoubdji, qui assistait à l'entrevue, donna lecture d'un Iradé transmis de Constantinople, qui ordonnait de "pendre Mourad, après vingt-quatre heures de tortures, s'il refusait de signer les pièces présentées."

Cette lecture n'a pas eu l'effet qu'on attendait; aussi Mourad a-t-il été livré aux geôliers, qui avaient reçu l'ordre de lui appliquer les tortures.

On lui a doublé les chaînes, et on lui a passé une boule en fer, pesant 10 kilog., à l'anneau du cou. La bastonnade lui a été donnée avec des fouets et des gourdins; mais toutes ces tortures n'ont pas pu davantage faire changer la décision de Mourad, qui s'était promis de ne pas s'abaisser au mensonge pour sauver sa personne. On a augmenté les tortures, on l'a battu plus fortement encore; le corps du pauvre supplicié s'est couvert de meurtrissures bleuâtres; on lui a arraché un à un, avec des pincettes, les poils de la barbe et des moustaches; mais aucune torture n'a pu lui arracher la signature qu'on lui demandait.

Les geôliers, étonnés de trouver une résistance aussi opiniâtre chez un homme si affaibli, ont rapporté le fait au Gouverneur-Général.

Sur l'ordre de son Excellence la dernière épreuve, la plus cruelle, a été mise alors en vigueur pour briser la volonté de fer de Mourad.

On a couvert le plancher du cachot par des broussailles, et on y a placé des fers pointus et des clous; la vue de ces préparatifs n'a nullement fait peur à Mourad, qui a persisté dans son refus, et qui, couché dessus, a été roulé sur ces broussailles et ces clous, pendant une heure entière. Sous ces tortures il a enfin perdu la connaissance; les geôliers l'ont alors éveillé par des cordiaux, et de nouveaux ils lui ont proposé de signer la déclaration. Mourad, quoiqu'à demi-mort, a opposé encore une fois un refus formel.

Deux jours après il a été condamné à la peine de mort par le Tribunal Criminel de Bitlis.

No. 330.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 352.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 3, 1895.*

IN the communication from the Armenian Patriarch, transmitted to your Lordship in my immediately preceding despatch, an account was given of alleged tortures and ill-treatment inflicted in Bitlis prison on Mourad Hampartzoum Boyadjian, who has since given evidence before the Commission of Inquiry at Moush.

I telegraphed to Mr. Shipley to inquire if any confirmation of these allegations transpired during the examination of Mourad.

I have now received a telegram from Mr. Shipley reporting that during his examination Mourad stated that while at Bitlis, before his public trial, he was kept standing for fourteen hours with his feet chained and one arm extended with a heavy weight attached to it; he was, in addition, beaten, and hairs were torn out of his moustache; the next day he was again made to stand for ten hours. Since that time, beyond having been fettered, it did not appear he had been specially ill-treated.

Your Lordship will observe that according to this version Mourad was not tortured to the extent described by the Patriarch, and a comparison between the two accounts may perhaps serve as a standard for estimating the general accuracy of the reports received by His Beatitude from the provinces.

Mr. Shipley also reports that Mourad showed considerable skill in his replies to the Commissioners; he stated very plainly and fully the grievances of the Armenians with

regard to their oppression by the Kurds and the misgovernment by the local authorities, at the same time he avoided making any damaging admissions. As to the atrocities, Mourad had not much to say, and from his own account he does not appear to have been present.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

No. 331.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 354.)
My Lord, *Pera, June 4, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting an Armenian demonstration against the Trebizond authorities.

Mr. Longworth has since telegraphed that the Bishop has committed suicide.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 331.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, May 25, 1895.*

AN Armenian demonstration took place this morning, which happily ended in no serious disturbance.

It originated in the Bishop declaring his intention of abandoning Trebizond and returning to Constantinople, as the authorities gave no heed to his representations, especially such as he made on the retention in prison of Armenians without trial.

About 500 people collected at the Bishopric, and there was great excitement, particularly so among the women, some of whom were armed with clubs.

The Bishop sent his Deacon for advice. I strongly recommended him to disperse the crowd by promising to remain at Trebizond. Soon after I received the message that the throng was thickening and threatening to become violent. It was believed that my presence there would have a salutary effect. I consequently went at once, and having had a few of the more intelligent men and women called before the Bishop, told them in grave and earnest language to return to their work, and, by keeping quiet, refrain from embarrassing those who were working for their good. My words had the desired effect, and succeeded in dispersing the crowd.

I then called on the Vali, whom I found most indignant at the conduct of the Bishop. He, however, calmed down on hearing from me that the matter was at an end.

The departure of the mail prevents my adding more than the remark that the authorities behaved well in this affair. The troops were held in readiness, while the gendarmes, on the Vali's orders, interfered in no way with the Armenians, preventing only as they did Turks from joining the crowd and causing an affray.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 332.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 357.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 354 of the 4th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond reporting the suicide of the Armenian Bishop of that place.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 332.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, May 27, 1895.*

A BRIEF account of the circumstances attending the commotion of last Saturday was given by me in my preceding despatch.

It is now my painful duty to report that the Armenian Prelate, Eghiché Ativazian, was this morning found in his room bleeding to death. He attempted suicide by cutting the veins of his arms with a pair of scissors. Then again, later in the day, while lying prostrate from loss of blood, he endeavoured once more to do away with himself by gulping down some of the carbolic acid solution used for the dressing of his wounds.

Kind-hearted, though weak-minded, this unhappy man seems to have felt keenly the alleged sufferings of his people, so much so that tales of persecution drove him evidently to the very verge of madness. His demanding the immediate release of the prisoners was ill-timed and ill-advised, his deciding to relinquish his functions was equally ill-timed and ill-advised. No useful purpose, however, can be served by now criticising too severely the conduct of one who is possibly on his death-bed, eager to die. Suffice it to say that he had, apparently, the misfortune of possessing a most tender and generous nature, sadly deficient in tact, judgment, and perception. Hence it is that his views so often conflicted with those of the Governor-General, Cadri Bey.

During the tumult of Saturday last, I found him greatly excited. He publicly, though in French, complained to me most bitterly against the authorities. His feelings, I understood, had chiefly revolted at what he believed to be the unnecessary and unwarrantable detention in prison of some Armenians. It is only too true that the trials have met with grievous obstructions, but this from causes, however, for which the Porte, and not the Vali, is mainly to blame. Be this as it may, I saw that as a consequence, the Bishop in his despair had lost all control over himself as well as over his community.

The situation was a critical one. Its urgency and gravity obliged me to speak to him with less mildness than firmness and sternness. I pointed out to him plainly that he had incurred a great responsibility, that he was, in fact, endangering the lives of his own people, and prejudicing the cause he held most at heart. My words impressed him then, as they depressed him since, for he at once eagerly and anxiously helped me to disperse the mob. He appears to have subsequently brooded over his folly, for at times it is said he turned to those around him asking with a troubled face what harm had he done; had he done any harm?

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

P.S.—It is with sorrow I have to add that Mgr. Ativazian is dead. He threw himself last evening from the tapestry window of the Bishopric into the street below. He fractured his skull and died instantaneously. To avoid disturbances the Patriarchate has sanctioned an ecclesiastical funeral, and the Vali has permitted the burial of the body in the garden of the Bishopric.

H. Z. L.

No. 333.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 357.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 321 of the 21st ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, in regard to the protection of witnesses who have given evidence before the Sassoun Commission.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 333.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May 19, 1895.*

THE accounts which have reached my colleagues and myself of the attitude of the Moush authorities towards the survivors of the Sassoun massacres, and especially towards such of them as have endeavoured in any way to bring their sufferings and grievances to the knowledge of the European Delegates with the Commission of Inquiry, make it clear that, as long as the present régime is maintained, these unfortunate people will be exposed to severe persecution, unless measures are speedily taken for their protection. It has also appeared to us that, as those among them who have given evidence unfavourable to the Turkish Government only ventured to do so because they relied upon the countenance and protection of our Delegates, we had incurred some moral obligation to do what was possible to preserve them from ill-treatment after the withdrawal of the Commission which now appears imminent.

We, therefore, agreed to-day to send identical telegrams to our respective Ambassadors, stating that we thought it our duty to lose no time in begging your Excellency to obtain from the Porte, on behalf of such persons, at least a promise of immunity from any consequences of their evidence after the departure of our Delegates.

If this promise is obtained, we should probably be quickly informed of any failure to observe it, to which we could at once direct the attention of your Excellency.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 334.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 361.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 343 of the 28th ultimo, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, transmitting an extract from Dr. Jewett's letter of the 22nd instant in regard to complaints against the Sivas Government.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 334.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Trebizond, May 28, 1895.*

IN connection with my despatch of the 21st instant, I beg leave to give the following two paragraphs taken from Dr. Jewett's letter of the 22nd instant:—

"Complaints of wrongs and injustice continue to come in. I could send you fifteen or twenty more complaints similar to the sample I sent you last week, but I suppose there is not much utility in it."

"Last week the Archbishop received a telegram reporting that the Hamidiehs had attacked and wounded some Armenians in a village near Azizieh and threatened to destroy them all. It appears that only one Armenian was seriously wounded."

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 335.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 362. Confidential.)
Constantinople, June 5, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Block, my First Dragoman, giving the substance of the reports he has heard in regard to the feeling prevailing at the Palace as to the Armenian reform proposals of the three Powers.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 335.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

(Confidential.)

IT may be as well to place on record what is supposed to have passed on the question of Armenian reforms during the last few days.

On Thursday it was hoped that a favourable answer would be given, and there were persistent rumours of a change of Ministry. This was only natural, as it is no secret that the Grand Vizier follows the lead of the military party at the Palace, which advises absolute refusal of the proposed reforms. Kiamil Pasha, Said Pasha, ex-Grand Viziers, both favourable to reform, were spoken of as Grand Vizier and Minister of the Interior, and Ismail Kemal Bey, a strong Constitutionalist, one of Midhat's men, and a partisan of an English policy, was spoken of as Foreign Minister. On Thursday night there were rumours of opposition to the reforms by the Ulemn, which does not seem confirmed, and by the Kmds here, of whom there are many influential leaders at the Palace. The Sultan became frightened, troops were moved up to Yildiz in the night, and the secret police were instructed to make the most searching investigations. This was not generally known by the public, which still thought the Sultan would grant the reforms and change his Ministry, and even on Friday evening, when I saw the Foreign Minister at the Palace at 8 o'clock, he told me that a change of Grand Vizier was most probable. He was then going in to see the Sultan, and was very nervous. When he came out he had evidently been pleasantly surprised, and assured he would remain in office, but even on Saturday he thought the Grand Vizier might be changed. On Saturday and Sunday there were rumours that much discussion and violent altercation had taken place at the Palace between the military party, Derwish, Osman, and Zeki Pasha, and others who are hostile to the reforms, and those who were in favour of yielding to English demands, amongst whom is Fuad Pasha. Derwish Pasha is said to have drawn his sword upon him, and Fuad is said to have threatened the Grand Vizier.

The military party advised procrastination and refusal, and quoted Lord Salisbury's speech to prove nothing would be done by England alone. Somehow or other the impression prevailed that the union between the three Powers was not sincere, that Russia would not resort to force, and that England would be left in the lurch. Some say that the Sultan, seeing the opposition in his Ministry and *entourage*, decided to refuse, knowing that he would have to yield later on under pressure, in which case he could plead *force majeure*. The rôle of Munir Bey is not clear. He is said not to have the courage to repeat M. Cambon's messages, and lulled the Palace into a false sense of security against any ultimate unpleasantness at the same time that he was assuring M. Cambon that there would be a favourable answer. He told me that the whole blame was on the Ministers—"on tas de canailles." Nearly every one in the Palace was consulted on the answer to be given, as some one said, "même jusqu'au dernier cirkidji," and on Sunday night it was finally decided to refuse the proposals, which, as your Excellency knows, was done by Munir Bey at 2 A.M. Monday morning, and the present Ministers remain in power.

On Monday I saw both Said and Kiamil Pashas, ex-Grand Viziers. The former was reserved on the question, said he had been consulted, and added that he thought it a pity that as our intentions were to benefit the country there had been no means of coming to an understanding.

Kiamil Pasha was very outspoken, blamed the Sultan and his Ministers for their conduct in the matter, said he had done his best to warn them of the consequences. He said he had told them that if these proposals were refused England might demand still larger reforms, and that the British Government was powerless to withstand public opinion, and must go on. He concluded by saying that the pernicious system which had grown up in the last five years had so weakened the Administration that the Turkish Government is unable to assure the maintenance of order in any one of its numerous provinces.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

P.S.—Throughout the French Embassy had hoped for a favourable reply, but the Russian Dragoman has always prognosticated failure.

A. B.

Constantinople, June 5, 1895.

No. 335*.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 363.)
Constantinople, June 5, 1855.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 129 of the 21st February last, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum inclosing a despatch from Mr. Hallward in regard to the Bogaz Kessen trial.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 335*.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, May 21, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 4th February, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, respecting the trial of the prisoners in the Bogaz Kessen case, the ill-treatment of some of whom, resulting in death, was reported in Mr. Hallward's despatch of the 7th May, inclosed in my despatch to your Excellency of the 15th instant.

Mr. Hallward also gives further details respecting the Shatakh murder case, reported in the inclosure to my despatch of the 16th January, which seems to bear a close resemblance to that of Bogaz Kessen in so far that there, too, advantage seems to have been taken of Kurdish crimes to imprison and ill-treat a large number of innocent Armenians.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 335*.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, May 14, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 27th December last and the 26th January last respecting the Bogaz-Kessen case, I have the honour to report that the hearing of that case began on the 9th March. Twenty-six Armenians, of whom five were from Van and the rest from Bogaz Kessen and the neighbouring villages, were accused of taking part or being implicated in an attack on zaptiehs, which took place on a mountain about an hour's distance from Bogaz Kessen, one zaptieh being killed.

The first day some zaptiehs were examined who took part in the affair, and gave evidence as to the fight having taken place with a band of armed men, with whom they exchanged a large number of shots at some distance; they said they were in Kurdish costume, but they could not say whether they were Kurds or Armenians, but they heard

from villagers that they were Armenians. They did not come to close quarters with them, and when night came they retired, and so allowed the individuals in question to escape. Though much pressed by the President to say definitely whether they were Kurds or Armenians, they maintained positively that they could not say.

I attended at the next sitting of the Court and at two other sittings, and consequently had some opportunity of observing the procedure. The Court was composed of the President (a Turk) and two other Turks and two Christians. The Procureur-Général also sat on the bench. I heard nine of the principal hostile witnesses examined, viz., seven Kurds, one Yezeedi, and one Armenian. Their evidence in each case was compared with their previous depositions taken by the Juge d'Instruction, and the accused were asked, when the examination of each witness was concluded, whether they had any objection to make to the witness or his evidence. The examination was conducted entirely by the President, suggestions being occasionally made by the Procureur-Général or the advocates of the accused. The other members of the Court took no part in the proceedings whatever.

Considerable objection was made to some of the Kurdish witnesses by the Armenians on the ground that they were notorious robbers, and were in the habit of plundering their village. The frequency of robberies and even of murders in that district was also attested by the Yezeedi witness, who, when asked whether he thought the attack on the zaptiehs was made by Kurds or Armenians, said he could not say, but that he had known of many such affairs, his own brother having been killed by Kurds only eight days before the fight in question, and an Armenian having been killed at Bogaz Kessen shortly before that.

A carpet was produced in evidence which was said to have been left behind by the outlaws, and was identified by one of the Kurds as having been in the house of Bogos, Headman of Bogaz Kessen. Another witness, however, said that it was a common sort of carpet, and that he had seen such carpets among Kurds.

All kinds of leading questions were put by the President, such as "It is said that these men were brought from Persia by Bogos. What do you think?" But the witnesses refused to be drawn into any positive statement with regard to the outlaws, and nearly every one corrected the statements written down in the preliminary depositions, by which they were made to say positively that the outlaws were Armenians.

The last witness I saw examined was an Armenian named Ohannès, commonly called "Vapor," who had been sent to the village to collect tithes. He entirely denied the evidence given in his deposition, which was hostile to the villagers, saying it had been extorted from him by force. Whereupon the Court adjourned and decided he must be examined again another day. He was then sent to prison and was re-examined two days after, when he declared that he had been bribed by Armenians to repudiate his deposition, and he now declared it to be true. As far as I saw, there was no evidence whatever to incriminate any of the accused. No sentence has yet been given.

A similar thing occurred shortly after in another case—that of the Shattukh murder mentioned in my despatch of the 8th January last. A Lieutenant in the army was killed by a Kurd under circumstances perfectly well known to every one.

Two months afterwards eight Armenians were arrested and charged with complicity in the crime. One of them, a certain Ohan Effendi, has lately got off by payment of money to the officials concerned. Twenty-one months after the first arrest, viz., October 1894, ten more were arrested on the same charge, and they were all to have been brought up for trial on the 27th ultimo, but it was found that the principal witness against them, one Zado, an Armenian, was shaky in his evidence, so the trial was postponed till the 30th. In Court, however, he absolutely denied the truth of his deposition, saying that it had been extorted from him by force. He was accordingly sent to prison, where he is still. Three other witnesses for the prosecution also denied all knowledge of the affair, and they were allowed to go, and the trial is suspended for the present.

Thus seven men have been in prison for two years and four months, and ten others for seven months, while there is really no case against them.

These are fair examples of "political" cases.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 336.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 364.)
Constantinople, June 5, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing one from Mr. Hallward in regard to the condition of the Vilayet of Van.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 336.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, May 22, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van on the subject of the present condition of the Van Vilayet.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 336.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, May 15, 1895.

Sir,

I CONTINUE to hear complaints from all sides against the Kurds. In some villages they turn their cattle into the growing wheat of the Armenian peasants, and thus nip their harvest in the bud. Robberies of sheep, cattle, and produce are still frequent, and almost unchecked. Shakir, the notorious murderer and robber mentioned in my despatch of the 28th August last, continues to rob Armenian villages of sheep, grain, &c., in the districts of Norduz, Shattukh, and Haigatzor, and much the same thing goes on in other districts.

If there were only some security, the harvest this year promises well, but unless some measures are taken before long to check the Kurds I fear there will be great distress in this province by next winter.

There are now upwards of 2,000 Armenian beggars in Van, the total Armenian population of the town being perhaps 20,000 to 25,000. Besides those who are actually beggars, it is calculated that nearly one-third of the population habitually live on insufficient food. About three-fourths of the beggars have come in of late years from the villages, driven out by Kurds. Besides those who have come into the town there are others scattered about in other villages, and last year upwards of 100 families emigrated from the Adeljevaz district, and about the same number from Bashkalé. This emigration to Russia and Persia and influx into the town takes so many hands off the land in districts already very thinly populated, and causes a diminution of the supply of grain, the price of which has risen enormously in the last two or three years, though, if the peasants were allowed to live in peace, it ought to be very cheap and abundant, there being no export.

I cannot see how there can be any hope of improvement unless the Hamidiehs are disbanded and the Kurds in general are given to understand that they are to cease plundering the Armenians, and that the law will be enforced against them as it is against the Christians.

A communication I have received from a village in the Khoshab district, east of this, may serve to illustrate the present position of the Armenian peasants:—

"For the last ten years the Kurds have done us great harm. My father, mother, brother-in-law, and nephew have been killed by them. For the last two or three years they have stolen sheep, cattle, and produce of all kinds. When we complain the Kurds say, 'Complain where you will,' and continue worse than before. Now we can scarcely find bread. A volume is necessary to contain an account of our sufferings. When we complained to the Aga (Kurd), he said, 'What can I do?' When

the Vali came last year I told him that certain Kurds had plundered the Armenians, the Vali spat in my face'" (a figurative expression, I suppose), "'and asked me why I told him this. When the Vali gives me such an answer, what do you expect me to do?' From this it may be understood in what a state we are."

A trustworthy correspondent writes to me with reference to the Nestorian districts of Hekkiari:—

"Every Christian in the Nestorian districts round Kochannes is watching the Moush investigation and hoping for good from it. They feel that they are doomed if the issue is not favourable to their protection and does not cover their districts. The Guever plain is ruined by locusts, Kurds, and a heavily pressing taxation, and the villages near Julamerik are in a worse state. I have travelled this winter through a good many villages, and, without a single exception, the tale is of absolute ruin through the Kurdish raids, which carry off all sheep and cattle, and the heavy taxes of a Government which affords no protection against the Kurds."

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 337.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 365.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum on the uneasiness existing in the district.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 337.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Erzeroum, May 25, 1895.*

IN his private telegram of the 20th May Mr. Shipley states that fears are entertained at Moush lest some of the sufferers by recent events should take some desperate action rather than continue to endure their present miserable condition, which nothing has been done to alleviate. His later telegrams of the 23rd instant show that those fears were not without foundation, a serious disturbance being only prevented apparently by prompt measures for relieving the starving Sassoonlis who had assembled round the house where the Commission sits.

A similar feeling, depending not upon mere material destitution, but upon the absence of the first conditions of security and good government, and the hopes aroused by the intervention of the Powers in the matter of the Sassoon massacres, seems now to pervade the more impatient of the Armenians throughout these provinces. Warnings reach me from those who ought to be well informed that unless some practical result is seen before long from the Commission of Inquiry there is likely to be a revival of active sedition throughout the country on a larger scale than has yet been witnessed, and though, personally, I am inclined to believe that there is much exaggeration in the accounts of preparations in the Caucasus for a revolutionary movement, yet they cannot be entirely disregarded at a moment when the sentiment I have described as existing in Turkish Armenia would furnish a favourable field for such propaganda.

Unrest and panic among the Christians of these countries is always accompanied by increased fanaticism of the Moslems. I would not say that one is necessarily caused by the other, rather that they act and react upon each other in a blind, illogical manner. A causeless scare among the Christians will quickly bring upon the scene a mob of Mussulman fanatics, ready to massacre if a free hand is given them.

This tendency is to be remarked in Erzeroum at the present moment. The Armenians have of late been showing signs of increased apprehensions for which no immediate cause was assignable. At once the more unruly spirits among the Moslem townsfolk have resumed their former threatening attitude, and it has been found necessary again to increase the military precautions for the security of the town. This bad impression has now been aggravated by the murder on Tuesday, the 21st instant, of

three Armenians on the Erzeroum–Bayazid road, at a point in the Deve Boyour Pass, not more than 5 miles from Erzeroum. The bodies of the victims were found by the roadside, the heads of two being cut off and laid beside them. Although nothing is known positively about the murderers, the general conjecture seems to be that they were soldiers from a neighbouring fort which overlooks the road.

Briefly, it may be said that the delay in attaining any tangible result from the active interest recently manifested by European Powers in the condition of Turkish Armenia has undoubtedly produced a feeling of suspense which threatens to become almost unendurable.

Christians and Moslems alike begin to believe that the much-talked-of Bitlis Commission is only another device of the Porte to tide over present difficulties by a pretence of inquiry, destined, as usual, to end inconclusively when that interest has abated. It is therefore sincerely to be hoped that remedial measures may yet be applied in time to avert a fresh crop of disorder, for which the ground seems to be preparing, and so falsify the prevalent opinion.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

No. 338.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 366.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 5, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit to your Lordship copy of a telegram received by M. Cambon from the French Consul at Jeddah respecting the recent attack on the Consuls there, and the attitude of the native population. The substance of the communication has already been telegraphed to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 338.

M. Descoutural to M. Cambon.

(Télégraphique.) *Djeddah, le 3 Juin, 1895.*

ON a reconnu l'innocence des Arabes arrêtés après l'attentat. Les assassins se sont enfuis sur des chameaux postés à proximité. Omar Nazif a révélé leurs noms au Vali, mais leur arrestation est difficile.

L'insolence de la population est accrue par la suppression, sur l'ordre du Vali, de toutes les mesures sanitaires, tandis que les fonctionnaires Musulmans de l'Office Sanitaire refusent de venir à leur bureau, l'inspecteur, les Européens, et presque tous les médecins se sauvent à bord des navires.

Les vaisseaux de guerre sont attendus, mais au cas où ils ne paraîtraient pas et où des réparations éclatantes ne seraient pas accordées les Chrétiens se trouveraient dans une position critique. On annonce l'arrivée d'un aviso Anglais. Je pense que cela ne suffit pas et que pour assurer l'application des mesures sanitaires, il conviendrait d'occuper Jeddah provisoirement. Les Turcs sont, en effet, impuissants à garantir la sécurité et cèdent à la pression de la population.

Saati Pacha, Commandant de la division navale Turque, vient de déclarer au Consul d'Angleterre que la présence d'un autre bâtiment Anglais serait bien nécessaire. Mon collègue vient d'en aviser Lord Cromer.

No. 339.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 142. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 4, 1895.*

DURING a conversation which I had with Prince Lobanoff this afternoon I mentioned to his Excellency that your Lordship had informed me by telegraph that

you had told M. de Staal, in reply to his communication that the Russian Government would in no case associate themselves with measures of constraint against Turkey with regard to the question of Armenian reforms, that Her Majesty's Government had not taken any decision as to the course to be pursued in the event of the Sultan refusing to comply with our demands.

Prince Lobanoff said that he would speak to me frankly on the subject, and proceeded to do so with a certain amount of warmth. He said that although the three Ambassadors at Constantinople had elaborated and presented to the Sultan a scheme of reforms for Armenia, this by no means gave them the right of resorting to coercive measures, or indeed to threatening language, if the Sultan declined to accept it, or put forward counter-proposals. He had never concealed from me his opinion that the proposed scheme was open to objection, and he certainly never considered it in the light of an ultimatum to the Sultan which was to be followed by coercive measures if His Majesty refused to accept it. On learning, therefore, from the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople that Sir Philip Currie had consulted him as to the measures which might become necessary, his Excellency had instructed M. de Nélidoff to forward to St. Petersburgh the full text of the Sultan's reply, and to take no steps until he should have received further instructions.

His Excellency hoped that a full consideration of the Sultan's reply might enable the three Governments, who were in a better position than their Ambassadors at Constantinople to consider the question calmly, to come to an understanding on the subject, and he trusted that your Lordship would consult him as to the course which should be pursued, but he feared that Her Majesty's Government, urged on by public opinion, or rather the so-called public opinion, which he believed had been the work of the Armenian Committees, would be inclined to adopt a course with which Russia could not associate herself. The fact was that the Armenian Committees in London and elsewhere aimed at the creation in Asia Minor of a district in which the Armenians should enjoy exceptional privileges, and which would form the nucleus ("noyau") of a future independent Armenian kingdom, and to this Russia would not and could not agree.

Prince Lobanoff added that he had already mentioned to me the agitation which existed among the Armenians in Russian territory, and he had now received a further report from the Minister of the Interior on the subject, which, however, he had not yet had time to read, as he had only just returned from his weekly audience of the Emperor at Tsarskoe Selo.

I thanked Prince Lobanoff for the very frank manner in which he had spoken to me on this subject, as a clear statement of the views of each Government was the only way of arriving at a satisfactory understanding, and I promised his Excellency to report at once to your Lordship the substance of the language he had used to me, which I attempted to embody in my telegram No. 61 of this day's date.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 340.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 144. Very Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 4, 1895.*

WITH reference to Sir Philip Currie's telegrams Nos. 139 and 140 of the 29th April, copies of which were inclosed in your Lordship's despatch No. 164 of the 29th ultimo, I have the honour to report that Prince Radolin has on more than one occasion spoken to me on the subject of the Armenian reforms, and expressed the opinion that although the Sultan might be induced to accept a scheme of reforms drawn up by the three Ambassadors of England, Russia, and France, he doubted whether it would be possible to insure their execution. Prince Radolin also said that he was convinced that disturbances in Armenia were provoked by the Armenian Committees in different parts of the world, who, it was well known, were attempting to erect an independent Armenian kingdom.

Prince Radolin also told me that on taking leave of the Sultan, on his appointment as Ambassador here, he had made a communication to the Sultan on the subject. His Excellency was good enough to read to me the paper, which was drawn up in French, and which he had read to the Sultan. The substance of it was that the German Government, who were well aware of the desire of His Majesty that all his subjects should be

treated with justice, had heard with deep regret of the recent occurrences in Armenia. The German Government were convinced that the existing laws of the Empire were sufficient to insure the protection of His Majesty's Christian subjects, but that it was evident that in many cases these laws had been allowed to fall into abeyance, and the Governors of different provinces had acted in defiance of them. Under the present system of Government, the responsibility for the actions of the Governors must necessarily fall upon the Sultan himself, and Prince Radolin therefore suggested that the appointment of the Governors and other officials should be made by His Majesty's Ministers, who would thus become answerable for their actions, and thus relieve His Majesty of the responsibility which now attaches to him personally.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 341.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 147. Confidential.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 5, 1895.*

IN my interview with Prince Lobanoff this afternoon, I communicated to his Excellency the substance of Sir P. Currie's telegram of the 3rd instant which your Lordship did me the honour to repeat to me in your telegram No. 104 of yesterday.

Prince Lobanoff had received a telegram in the same sense, although not quite in such full detail, from M. de Nélidoff. He would now await the text of the Sultan's reply, but he was not astonished that His Majesty should have refused to accept the scheme of reforms elaborated by the Ambassadors, which he himself considered open to objection.

His Excellency went on to say that since seeing me yesterday he had read the Report from the Minister of the Interior, to which, as I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 142 of yesterday, he had alluded in our conversation. According to this Report, the Armenians in Russia were in a very excited state, were in communication with the Armenian Committees in London, who, he regretted to see, had so much influence, and were attempting to send arms and money to the Armenians in Turkish territory.

It was impossible for Russia to allow her territory to be made use of for the purpose of stirring up an insurrection in a neighbouring State, and the local authorities had been instructed to take every precaution to prevent either arms or money being smuggled across the frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 342.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 10.)

(No. 149.)
My Lord, *St. Petersburgh, June 5, 1895.*

IN obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram No. 103 of yesterday's date, I have informed Prince Lobanoff that Her Majesty's Government were sending a second-class cruiser of 3,600 tons and a sloop of 900 tons to Jeddah, and I asked him to inform me of the views of the Russian Government with regard to the attack upon foreign Consuls in that town.

Prince Lobanoff stated that the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople had applied for a Russian ship to be sent to Jeddah, and that he had sent on the application to the Minister of Marine, but that he was under the impression that there was no Russian ship in the Mediterranean available for the purpose.

I took this opportunity of communicating to Prince Lobanoff the substance of your Lordship's telegrams Nos. 100 and 102 of yesterday, as his Excellency had not received such full details of the state of affairs at Jeddah.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 343.

Mr. Gosselin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 136. Confidential.)

Berlin, June 8, 1895.

My Lord,

IN the course of conversation yesterday, Baron von Marschall asked me whether I had any information as to the course which Her Majesty's Government intend to pursue, should the Sultan persist in his refusal to accept the scheme of reform drawn up by the three Ambassadors at Constantinople.

I replied that, as far as I was aware, Her Majesty's Government had not yet taken any decision as to their future action, and that it would probably be deemed necessary to await the arrival in London of the text of the Porte's reply before taking any further action in the matter.

His Excellency replied that he saw in the newspapers that the Mediterranean Squadron had arrived off Beyrout; and that he thought if it was moved northwards to Besika Bay, it would probably tend to bring the Sultan and the Porte to a more reasonable frame of mind.

When the Porte had objected to the nomination of Signor Catalani to the Italian Embassy at Constantinople, Signor Crispi had succeeded in overcoming the opposition by the mere dispatch of an Italian fleet to the Ægean Sea.

His Excellency went on to say that the Sultan, availing himself of the visit a short time back to Germany of the German Under-Secretary at the Turkish Ministry of Finance (I think the name was Bertrand), had commissioned him to ask for an audience of the Emperor, and to enlist His Majesty's good offices in obtaining Concessions from the three Powers with regard to the question of Armenian reform.

His Majesty had, however, refused to see him, and had given orders that Prince Radolin, before leaving the Constantinople Embassy, should "give some good advice" to the Sultan.

Baron Holstein, one of the leading officials at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, told Colonel Swaine confidentially this morning that all Europe was scandalized at the excesses perpetrated on the Armenians, and that the German Government hoped that England would be able, either in concert with Russia and France, or alone, to carry through the scheme of reform proposed by the Ambassadors; if Her Majesty's Government succeeded in doing this alone, the position and influence of Great Britain would be put on a more satisfactory footing in Turkey than had been the case for some years past. Baron Holstein also hinted that the reason of the Sultan's refusal to accept the reform might possibly be found in the action of the Russian Ambassador at Constantinople, who, it was said, was giving but a lukewarm support to the proposals of his English and French colleagues.

I have, &c.
(Signed) MARTIN GOSSELIN.

P.S.—Since writing the above, I have had the advantage of reading Sir F. Lascelles' despatch No. 144, Very Confidential, of the 4th instant, which will reach your Lordship simultaneously with this despatch, and which gives the substance of the "good advice" given by the Emperor's orders to the Sultan by Prince Radolin before he left Constantinople.

M. G.

No. 344.

Mr. Atkin to Foreign Office.—(*Received June* 10.)

3, *Essex Court, Temple, London, June* 8, 1895.

Sir,

I BEG to thank you for your letter of to-day's date, and to request that you will be so good as to inform the Earl of Kimberley that, if his Lordship approves, the sum of 500*l.* will be at once remitted to you for transmission to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople to be applied for the relief of the most urgent cases of distress in Moush and Boulanik districts.

The Committee suggests that it might be desirable to associate with the distributing Committee the Russian and French Consuls-General at Erzeroum, or their representatives; but on this point they would be guided by Sir Philip Currie's advice.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD ATKIN, *Hon. Treasurer, Duke of Argyll's Armenian Relief Fund.*

No. 345.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 237.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 10, 1895, 10·30 A.M.

PRINCE LOBANOW'S statement, repeated in your Lordship's telegram No. 58 of the 31st May, as to the language I held to the Russian Ambassador here, was incorrect, and M. de Nélidow admits it to be so.

My telegram to your Lordship No. 191, Confidential, of the 28th May, contained a correct report of what I said, viz., that I thought it likely that Her Majesty's Government would, if left to deal alone with the question of reforms, take active steps rather than commit themselves to a proposal for a Conference which all the Powers might not accept. This, however, I stated was only my personal opinion, and I had had no communication from my Government as to the mode in which pressure might be applied to Turkey in the event of our scheme of reforms being refused.

No. 346.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 238.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 10, 1895, 11·20 A.M.

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 65:

The Governor's reply to the French Consul at Jeddah was a refusal. On the ground that the authorities were not able to distinguish between pilgrims and Bedouins, the Foreign Minister asked the Dragomans that the request of the French for the disarming of Arabs entering Jeddah should be withdrawn, as he believed that such a step would do more harm than good.

This shows the Sultan's fear of offending the Arabs and the weakness of the authorities, and appears hardly a valid excuse.

The French Consul's reports appear to be of an alarmist character; but until we know what steps will be taken for punishing the guilty, compensating sufferers, and insuring security, I think Her Majesty's ship "Pique" should not leave.

No. 347.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 10.)

(No. 239.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 10, 1895, 8·30 P.M.

THIS afternoon I had a long and interesting conversation about Armenian reforms with Said Pasha, the new Grand Vizier.

His Highness opened the conversation by asking that I should obtain some delay from Her Majesty's Government in communicating their decision on the answer returned by the Sultan to our scheme of reforms.

I replied that it was essential that the principles of the plan of reforms for their execution should be accepted, and that unless I could give Her Majesty's Government an assurance that the delay would lead to a modification of the answer in a sense that would be satisfactory to them, there would be no use in my attempting to comply with Said Pasha's request.

His Highness said that while agreeing that reforms were necessary, and while recognizing that the situation was extremely grave, yet time would be required for him to reconcile with the susceptibilities of the Sultan the measures that would have to be adopted, of which he instanced as the points of most difficulty the admission of

the Dragomans to the Commission of Control, and the veto by the Ambassadors on the appointments of the Valis. I replied that without the guarantees proposed by us, which were indispensable for the proper execution of the reforms, and without the support of the Powers, it would be impossible for him to carry out the scheme in face of the difficulties which the Palace would throw in his way. In England the guarantees as they stood were held to be insufficient, and any proposals for their reduction would have no chance of obtaining the consent of Her Majesty's Government.

I finally assured him of the disinterestedness of our action, and of our sincere desire to promote the welfare of the Turkish Empire by introducing into the Administration reforms which were indispensable. His Highness listened to me with apparent satisfaction, and gave me to understand that he would do his best to obtain a solution that would be satisfactory. I consider that the attitude of the Grand Vizier justifies me in asking your Lordship that the consideration of the Sultan's reply should be postponed until the further communication which His Highness promises for Saturday has been telegraphed to Her Majesty's Government.

No. 348.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 227.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 10, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 345 of the 28th ultimo, inclosing an application from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van for permission to make a tour in the southern portion of his Consular district during this summer.

I concur in your Excellency's view that, in present circumstances, it is inexpedient that Mr. Hallward should undertake the proposed journey.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 349.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir M. Durand.

(No. 61.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 10, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 40 of the 3rd ultimo, inclosing a Report by Mr. Paton relative to the alleged massacres of Armenians in Turkish territory, and stating that you have authorized Her Majesty's Consul-General at Tabreez to charge Mr. Paton's travelling expenses, and to grant him an allowance at the rate of 1*l.* a-day during his absence.

I sanction the payment of these charges.

Mr. Paton has succeeded in obtaining information of considerable value, and I have pleasure in expressing my entire approval of his proceedings.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 350.

Foreign Office to Admiralty.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 10, 1895.*

I AM directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit to you, for the information of the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, a copy of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople relative to the situation at Jeddah.*

I am to suggest that the substance of this, and of Sir P. Currie's previous telegram No. 232, a copy of which accompanied my other letter of to-day's date, should be communicated to the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Pique" for his observations.

Lord Kimberley understands that instructions have already been telegraphed to him not to leave Jeddah until further orders.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

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* No. 346.

No. 351.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received June 11.)

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Admiralty, June 11, 1895.*

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the paraphrase of a telegram, dated this day, from the Admiralty to the Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean Station.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 351.

Admiralty to British Admiral, Beyrout.

(Telegraphic.) P. *Admiralty, June 11, 1895.*

CONTINUE your cruise on the coast of Syria and Asia Minor as far as Marmarice and Boudroun, calling at Alexandretta, keeping in telegraphic communication. Report proposed movements. Cyprus is not to be visited at present.

No. 352.

Armenian Relief Fund to Foreign Office.—(Received June 11.)

Sir, 3, *Essex Court, Temple, London, June 11, 1895.*

I BEG to thank you for your letter of yesterday. As we are opening branches of the Armenian Relief Fund at Paris and St. Petersburgh with a view to any sums collected in Russia and France being remitted to M. de Nélidoff or M. Cambon at Constantinople, it will be necessary for our Committee to ascertain whether the Russian and French Consuls at Erzeroum would be willing to distribute relief before we make a remittance to a private individual.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD ATKIN,
Honorary Treasurer.

No. 353.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 11.)

(No. 240. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 11, 1895, 7:30 P.M.*

FOLLOWING in reference to my immediately preceding telegram.

This afternoon Mr. Block brought me a private and personal message from the Grand Vizier, to the effect that he had acquainted the Sultan with the substance of our conversation of yesterday, and that he felt he had no chance of being able to overcome the susceptibilities of His Imperial Majesty unless I could supply him with some other version or wording of the Memorandum on the following three points:—

1. The necessity of the appointment of the High Commissioner meeting with the approval of the Powers.

2. The right of the Powers to veto the nomination of Valis.

3. The presence of Dragomans on the Permanent Commission of Control.

Mr. Block replied that he had no doubt, in the absence of further instructions from my Government, that I should continue to refuse discussion on these points, and warned His Highness that this message would be fruitless.

The Grand Vizier pointed out how extremely difficult his position was, adding that it was not of his seeking. He expressed great anxiety to receive a reply to his message before the Council of Ministers meets at 1 o'clock to-morrow. The answer which I

propose to return to the Grand Vizier through Mr. Block is, that in view of the understanding existing between the French and Russian Ambassadors and myself, and also the instructions of Her Majesty's Government, I regret that it is impossible for me to discuss the guarantees which the three Powers had proposed in the Memorandum.

No. 354.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 67.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1895.

AFTER consideration of your telegram No. 239 of the 10th instant, the Cabinet have decided to await the further communication promised by the Grand Vizier for Saturday next, the 15th instant. In the meanwhile, the Mediterranean Squadron will move on slowly. The precise orders will be communicated to you as soon as they reach me from the Admiralty.

No. 355.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 68.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1895.

I AM informed by the Armenian Relief Fund that they are opening branches at Paris and St. Petersburgh, and that, before applying to Dr. Washburn, they propose to ask for the assistance of the French and Russian Consuls at Erzeroum for the distribution of relief to the suffering Armenians.

It would be desirable to ascertain whether the officers referred to will be allowed to undertake the distribution of the money.

No. 356.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 73.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1895.

YOUR Excellency should support the French Ambassador in urging the Turkish Government to send instructions to the authorities at Jeddah for the disarmament of Bedouins entering the town.

It would, however, be better not to speak of landing a force from the ships, as the Commander of Her Majesty's ship "Pique" appears to consider that this course would not be practicable.

No. 357.

*The Earl of Kimberley to the Marquis of Dufferin.**

(No. 70.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 11, 1895.

THE question of the guarantees demanded in the scheme for Armenian reforms has formed the subject of a long conversation between the new Grand Vizier and Sir P. Currie, and the former finally let it be understood that he would use his best endeavours to bring about a satisfactory solution.

A further communication is promised by the Grand Vizier on Saturday next, the 15th instant, and Sir P. Currie recommends that consideration of the Sultan's reply should be deferred pending receipt of that communication.

The Cabinet have agreed to this delay.

In informing the Minister for Foreign Affairs, you may avail yourself of the opportunity to inquire what view his Excellency takes of the Sultan's answer, which appears to Her Majesty's Government to amount practically to a rejection of the demands of the three Powers.

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* Also to Sir F. Lascelles (No. 106).

No. 358.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 241.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 12, 1895.

MR. GRAVES and his colleagues sent the following identic telegram to their respective Ambassadors yesterday:—

"On the 1st June we received a joint telegram from the Delegates announcing that the inquiry was closed. As we had received no further news from Moush since that date, we decided to inquire of the Delegates by telegram what there still remained for them to do, thinking that we might then, if necessary, request our Ambassadors to authorize the Delegates to leave Moush if all they have left to do is to write up the arrears of their Protocols and finish their final Report.

"The French Delegate telegraphs under date of 11th June in the name of his British and Russian colleagues, that they have completed the examination of their witnesses excepting two absent Mukteers. They continued, however, under orders from their Ambassadors to attend the Commission, as the closing of the inquiry lay entirely in its hands. It had now ceased to hear evidence, and had communicated to the Delegates the previous day the first five portions of its final Report as it was to be.

"They, the Delegates, were hard at work drawing up their own Report and completing their Protocols."

No. 359.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 12.)

(No. 44.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Vienna, June* 12, 1895.

COUNT GOLUCHOWSKI wishes me to inform your Lordship that it is absolutely false, as persistently asserted by certain organs of the press here, and by the correspondent of the London "Standard," that his views on the Armenian question are different from those of Count Kálnoky.

No. 360.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir E. Monson.

(No. 6.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 12, 1895.

I REQUEST you to thank Count Goluchowsky for his friendly and satisfactory assurances in regard to the Armenian question, as reported in your Excellency's telegram No. 44 of to-day.

No. 361.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 74.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 12, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 240, Confidential, of yesterday, relative to the desire of the new Grand Vizier to discuss with your Excellency the question of guarantees proposed in the scheme of Armenian reforms.

Your attitude is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

No. 362.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir F. Lascelles.

(No. 204.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 12, 1895.

WITH reference to my telegram No. 97 of the 3rd instant, I transmit herewith a copy of a telegram from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople,* pointing out that he had made no such statement to his Russian colleague as that attributed to him by Prince Lobanoff on the question of applying pressure to Turkey if the Porte's answer to the proposal of reform were delayed.

Your Excellency should take an opportunity to explain the matter to Prince Lobanoff, and acquaint His Highness with the true version of the language used by Sir P. Currie to M. de Nélidoff.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 363.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 242. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 13, 1895, 7·30 P.M.

THE only assurances that Mr. Block was able to obtain from the Grand Vizier, who has sent me another private message pleading insufficiency of time and begging for further delay, were the following:—

1. That he is working to obtain a solution which will be in conformity with the legitimate demands of Her Majesty's Government and the rights of the Sultan.

2. That in four or five days at latest an answer would be given.

His Highness stated that he was trying to convince the Sultan that the fate of the Ottoman Empire was at stake, but that he had great difficulties to contend with, as the Sultan was still undecided.

His Highness hoped that his message might not be communicated to Rustem Pasha, and begged that it might be considered private.

I replied, through Mr. Block, that His Highness' message had been received by me with regret, that as Her Majesty's Government had adjourned the decision to be taken in regard to the Turkish counter-project of the 3rd June on the receipt of a promise, which they had communicated to the two other Powers, of a reply on Saturday, it would be impossible for me to be the intermediary of a further demand for delay from my Government.

The Grand Vizier, as far as we are able to learn, is doing his best, but dares not take any engagement in view of the difficulty of dealing with the Sultan. If further delay is to be granted to the Porte, I am strongly of opinion that they should apply for it through Rustem Pasha, in which case more formal assurances would have to be given than the Grand Vizier has vouchsafed to me.

No. 364.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 13.)

(No. 63.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, June* 13, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 106 of the 11th instant.

Prince Lobanoff has sent the Sultan's reply to the Emperor, and cannot yet return a definite answer as to the view taken of it by the Russian Government. It is his Excellency's intention to compare carefully the Ambassador's scheme with the Sultan's reply, but, to make clear to me his point of view in considering the question, he spoke to me in the same sense as in the conversation I reported to your Lordship

* No. 435.

in my despatch No. 142 of the 14th instant. Russia would, his Excellency said, gladly see reforms applied to all the subjects of the Sultan, but she could not consent to the creation of a territory in proximity to her frontier where the Armenians should possess exceptional privileges—to the creation, in fact, in Asia Minor, of another Bulgaria.

No. 365.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 229.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 13, 1895.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 350 of the 29th ultimo, inclosing a copy of a note from the French Embassy at Constantinople, from which it appears that there is no foundation for the report of an attack on a French priest at Tokat, which was so circumstantially described in the communication from the Armenian Patriarch forwarded in your despatch No. 255 of the 23rd April.

I shall be glad to learn whether his Beatitude has any explanation to offer on the subject.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 366.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 230.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June* 13, 1895.

I HAVE received your despatch No. 351 of the 4th instant, inclosing a report from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond on the subject of an Armenian demonstration which took place there on the 25th ultimo.

I request your Excellency to convey to Mr. Consul Longworth my approval of his action on that occasion.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 367.

The Marquis of Dufferin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 187.)
My Lord, *Paris, June* 13, 1895.

IN accordance with instructions contained in your Lordship's telegram No. 79 of the 11th instant, I yesterday informed M. Hanotaux that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople recommended that the consideration of the reply of the Sultan should be postponed until the further communication promised by the Grand Vizier on Saturday next had been received; and I inquired of his Excellency what view he took of the Sultan's attitude.

His Excellency replied that his instructions to his Ambassador were to act in regard to the Armenian question in close harmony with Sir Philip Currie, and he had told M. Cambon that, provided the delay suggested was demanded on reasonable grounds and was not a mere excuse for indefinite postponement, the matter might be allowed to stand over for a few days, but he agreed with your Lordship in regarding the Sultan's recent reply as most unsatisfactory.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND AVA.

No. 368.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.—(Received June 14.)

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Admiralty, June 14, 1895.*

I AM commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, copy of a telegram, dated 12th instant, from the Commander-in-chief, Mediterranean.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EVAN MACGREGOR.

Inclosure in No. 368.

Admiral Sir M. Seymour to Admiralty.

(No. 131.)
(Telegraphic.) *Beyrout, June 12, 1895.*

YOUR No. 59.

Following are proposed movements:—

Leave Beyrout 17th June; Tripoli 21st June; Alexandretta 25th June; Marmarice 3rd July; and arrive at Budrum 3rd July.

No. 369.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 14.)

(No. 243.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 14, 1895, 11 A.M.*

MR. GRAVES telegraphed to me yesterday that on the 9th June some soldiers and Mussulman villagers surprised a band of armed Armenians, who had crossed the frontier from Russia, near Karahilissa, in Alashgerd, capturing two and killing four, while one, at least, escaped.

Fourteen prisoners belonging to the band captured in Van, referred to in Mr. Graves' despatch which formed the inclosure of my despatch No. 401 of the 24th instant, had arrived in Erzeroum the previous day, and proceeded the next day to Constantinople.

Mr. Graves adds that it appeared that a considerable quantity of arms had lately been smuggled into the frontier districts.

No. 370.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 76.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 14, 1895.*

I AM informed by the Committee of the Armenian Relief Fund that the Rev. W. Evans Cockshott, formerly Chaplain to Her Majesty's Embassy at Constantinople, would be prepared to proceed to the Vilayet of Bitlis for the purpose of distributing funds to the distressed Armenians.

Would your Excellency be able to obtain facilities for Mr. Cockshott, and could he in any way be assisted in his work by British Consular officers on the spot?

No. 371.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 77.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 14, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 242, Confidential, of yesterday reporting the communications which have passed between yourself and the Grand Vizier with regard to his Highness' request for further delay to consider the scheme of Armenian reforms.

The reply which you returned to his Highness is approved by Her Majesty's Government.

No. 372.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 244. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 15, 1895, 1·45 P.M.*

I HAVE spoken to the Russian Ambassador about the language held by Prince Lobanoff to Sir F. Lascelles, referred to in your Lordship's telegram No. 75 of the 13th June.

M. de Nélidoff believes that the Prince, in speaking of an Armenian Bulgaria, referred to the schemes advocated by the English press and the Anglo-Armenian Committee, and that in doing so he adopted a phrase employed in some Russian newspapers, which have declared that the object of England was to create another Bulgaria on the Russian frontier. M. de Nélidoff himself has heard nothing from St. Petersburgh which would lead him to suppose that the Russian Government abandon the plan of reforms prepared by the Ambassadors of Russia, France, and England. Prince Lobanoff's language may have arisen from a belief that Her Majesty's Government, if left to press their reforms alone, may extend the scope of their demands.

M. de Nélidoff thinks that his Government will not reject the portion of the Turkish project of the 3rd June, which states that the reforms will be extended to all parts of the Ottoman Empire, as Russia is not unfavourable to such an extension.

No. 373.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 245. Confidential.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 15, 1895, 7·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram to your Lordship No. 244 concerning Prince Lobanoff's language, M. Cambon, whom I have seen this afternoon, does not think that it indicates an intention to throw over the project of reforms, and since the privileges to be conferred on the Armenians will be equally enjoyed by Turks, Greeks, and Kurds inhabiting the same provinces, he considers they cannot properly be called exceptional.

No. 374.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 15.)

(No. 246.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 15, 1895, 10·35 P.M.*

THE Dragomans think that the Sultan will yield step by step, but that before he finally gives way a naval demonstration on our part will be necessary. The Russian and French Dragomans, Mr. Block assures me, have been doing their utmost, both at the Porte and the Palace, to obtain a full acceptance of the reform proposals.

No. 375.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir F. Lascelles.

(No. 208 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 15, 1895.*

THE Russian Ambassador called here this afternoon for the purpose of informing me that Prince Lobanoff had heard from Constantinople that the new Grand Vizier had requested a further delay before making his promised communication respecting the project of reforms for the Armenian provinces of Asiatic Turkey. Prince Lobanoff thought that it would be reasonable to agree to a further delay, but he wished to know whether Her Majesty's Government had received a similar communication, and what answer they had returned to it.

I said that Her Majesty's Ambassador at Constantinople had received a private message from the Grand Vizier to the same effect, and had replied that he could not be the intermediary for a further demand for delay.

I had not thought it necessary to take any action with regard to this message, but, of

course, if a formal application were received for more time, Her Majesty's Government would consider what answer should be given to it.

My own opinion was that the Grand Vizier would be more likely to induce the Sultan to take a favourable view of the proposals of the three Powers if these applications for delay were not too readily listened to.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 376.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 247.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 16, 1895.*

MR. SHIPLEY telegraphed to me to-day that the Turkish Relief Committee, whether through their own fault or that of the Armenians, had done practically nothing, and that there seemed no probability of their doing anything in the short time still left for sowing, which the Armenians told him was at least two or three weeks. He expected, however, that they would aid in providing food until the crops were ready. The Armenians had collected seed and some thirty head of oxen, which they proposed, providing the local authorities did nothing to prevent them, to convey to Sassoon, as it would suffice for the Kavvar district. As regards the Talori district, however, they stated that there was no possibility of sowing, and that the people collected there would inevitably have to come down again into the plains, but that for the Kavvar villages there was still time for sowing.

Mr. Shipley considers it to be of the greatest importance that nothing should be done to prevent the Armenians obtaining relief on their own account, and urges the appointment of some independent person to assist in the distribution. He says that Mr. Cole, who is at present at Moush, would be willing to administer the relief fund collected by him and his friends, provided the Turkish authorities afford him facilities. His fund, however, was small, and was nearly exhausted. The Turkish authorities appear to be very jealous of any interference, but would possibly not extend their jealousy to Mr. Cole.

Mr. Shipley had represented unofficially to Shefik Bey the necessity of immediate action as regarded the sowing of crops, and had been supported by his colleagues in his representation.

No. 377.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 248.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 16, 1895, 7·20 P.M.*

SASSOON distress: my preceding telegram.

An Armenian doctor living at Van is recommended by Dr. Washburne as the best person to distribute relief to the Sassoon sufferers. The missionaries Cole and Knapp are looked upon by the Turks as originators of the Sassoon agitation, whereas this doctor has not excited the suspicion of the authorities, and he has, moreover, an intimate knowledge of the country.

Further details will be sent your Lordship to-morrow by telegraph.

No. 378.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 16.)

(No. 249.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 16, 1895, 7·30 P.M.*

JEDDAH outrage: my telegram No. 238 of 10th June.

My French and Russian colleagues and myself propose to press for the punishment of the assassins and for compensation for the victims as soon as all the pilgrims have left Jeddah, which it is expected will be in about ten days.

The authorities declare that it is impossible to capture the assassins as long as the place is full of pilgrims, and it appears that there is some truth in this contention.

Consuls want us to demand the dismissal of the Grand Shereef, but I have doubts whether such a demand is advisable.

The Porte declare that Jeddah is now perfectly safe.

No. 379.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 360.)
My Lord, *Therapia, June 7, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting a case of injustice and ill-treatment to which an Armenian named Stepan Simonian has been subjected by the officials of Diarbekir and Bitlis.

I am causing a Memorandum on the case to be given to the Sultan's Chief Secretary, and shall request that it may be presented to His Imperial Majesty as confirming the statement I made to him as to the manner in which his orders are disobeyed by the local authorities.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 379.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Erzeroum, May 25, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from the Acting British Vice-Consul at Diarbekir, reporting the treatment which an Armenian of Hazzo, in Sassoon, has met with at the hands of the authorities of Diarbekir and Bitlis while endeavouring to obtain redress for the losses and sufferings to which he and his family had been subjected by the Kurds.

As regards the concluding paragraph of Mr. Boyajian's despatch, I would remark that, as Hazzo is at a considerable distance from the scene of the events of last year, it is doubtful, without further indication of the nature of Stepan's information, whether his appearance before the Commission would have been of much practical value to the inquiry.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 379.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Consul Graves.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Diarbekir, May 3, 1895.*

I BEG leave to call your attention to a case of gross injustice done by some local Government officials of Bitlis and Diarbekir to an Armenian, while he, through lawful means, was seeking redress for most grievous wrongs inflicted by ruffian Kurds upon his family.

A certain Stepan Simonian, belonging to a most respectable family in the district of a village close to Hazzo, the chief town of Sassoon, left four years ago for Constantinople by the express desire of the population, Moslem and Christian, with the view of obtaining from the Government the concession of working a certain salt mine in which all the people were interested. His project was most favourably received by the Government, but while he was working to obtain the needed permit, he was informed by his elder brother that some Kurds, instigated by the Sheikh of Zilan, had made a raid upon their village, set it on fire, plundered their effects, carried off all flocks and cattle, devastated their estate, and, worst of all, during the struggle they

had assassinated his (brother's) two sons in cold blood. I have also to add that such other unheard-of brutal atrocities were committed on the occasion by the Kurdish hordes as delicacy forbids me to mention.

Stepan, who I may state is a very intelligent man, did all he could in the capital, and succeeded in obtaining successively thirty-two separate orders from the Ministers of Justice, Interior, and Gendarmerie, addressed mostly to the ex-Vali of Bitlis and some to the Governor-General of the Diarbekir Vilayet, instructing them to arrest the criminals and to do justice to the man in question. But these were all of no avail, and ultimately Stepan petitioned His Imperial Majesty the Sultan, by whose gracious command a Vizirial, and, it may be, State categorical order was issued and addressed to the Vali of Diarbekir. Armed with this, he arrived here some fifteen months ago, and you will be surprised to learn that this order also, like the other ones, had no result.

When the Sheikh of Zilan and his companions arrived here lately on their way to Mecca, Stepan presented a Petition to Anis Pasha, praying his Excellency to arrest the man and bring him to justice. This Petition, however, was not only contemptuously thrown away, but the Chief of the Gendarmerie ("Tabour Aghassi") threatened the petitioner with imprisonment unless he left the town, and the said officer repeated the same threat publicly in the bazaars, adding that as he belongs to the Bitlis Vilayet he must go there for redress. To Bitlis Stepan went, intending to proceed from thence to Moush with the view of laying his grievances before the Commission of Inquiry. Soon after his arrival at Bitlis, he was arrested by the police, who probably had instructions from this place, and sharply examined. He stated his case, adding that he intended to proceed to Moush. The police told him that he must not go there; then Stepan was conducted to the presence of the Acting Vali, to whom he explained his case. His Excellency forbade his going to Moush, stating that he would look after his affairs. Stepan consented to this, and left the Vali's presence, immediately after which he was seized and thrown into prison, where he had remained some days, when one night three or four gendarmes appeared and ordered Stepan to come out, as he was to be sent away. Not knowing what would be done to him, and even fearing for his life, he declined to leave the prison at that hour of the night, whereupon several others of the gendarmes joined the former, and beat him most brutally until he became insensible, when they took him out, put him on a mule, and, in charge of four gendarmes, hurried him away to Diarbekir. He arrived here last week, and after spending one night in the prison, was discharged on bail that he should not go to the Vilayet of Bitlis (meaning, evidently, that he should not go to Moush).

The above statement needs no comment as it speaks for itself, but I cannot refrain from saying that no words are sufficient to condemn the conduct of those who, instead of seeing justice done to a poor man who was only seeking at the hand of the authorities redress for the wrong inflicted upon himself and family, treated him so shamefully and cruelly.

I have also to state that Stepan's going to Moush, in my opinion, was very desirable, not only for his own affairs, but because, as I understand, he possesses most authentic information as to the origin of the affairs which the Commission is engaged in examining.

I have, &c.
(Signed) T. BOYAJIAN.

No. 380.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 370.)
Constantinople, June 8, 1895.

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 44 of the 19th January, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Trebizond, reporting the murder of the Armenian informer Solomon Papazian.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 380.

Consul Longworth to Sir P. Currie.

Trebizond, May 31, 1895.

Sir,

IT may interest your Excellency to know that the body of the Armenian informer, Solomon Papazian (whose doings were mentioned in my despatch of the 10th January), was found buried in a cornfield near Charshamba. No efforts have been made to discover the murderer.

I have, &c.
(Signed) H. Z. LONGWORTH.

No. 381.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 371.)
Therapia, June 8, 1895.

My Lord,

IN my despatch No. 284 of the 1st ultimo I forwarded to your Lordship copy of a letter from the Armenian Patriarch in which it was stated that a Dragoman, formerly in the employment of the American Consular Agency at Alexandretta, named Boghos Shamlian, was in prison at Adana.

This information is confirmed by the despatch from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, of which I have the honour to inclose a copy, and which I have communicated to the United States' Minister.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 381.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

Aleppo, May 24, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Excellency's despatch of the 1st instant instructing me to report upon the case of an Armenian prisoner named Boghos Shamlian, and I beg to inform your Excellency, in reply, that this is the person of that name mentioned in my Report of the 3rd ultimo as imprisoned at Adana. With him are his son Hohannes, his nephew Heitoun, and nine others, all from Alexandretta.

Boghos Shamlian possesses considerable property in houses and gardens near that town, where he was formerly American Dragoman. When the American Consular Agency at Alexandretta was abolished a few years ago, it appears that Boghos Shamlian was retained in his office of Dragoman, or rather the American authorities appear to have neglected to notify the abolition of his post to the Government for, on referring to the Salnamé, or official calendar of the vilayet, I find his name registered up to the present year as American Dragoman.

It would appear, therefore, that, when his arrest took place, he was, in the eyes of the authorities, a privileged person, and, virtually, his arrest was an infringement of the Capitulations; but the case has long since been submitted to the American Minister, and I understand that he does not consider it one for official intervention.

I find that in my despatch of the 3rd April I stated that Boghos Shamlian had not been put upon his trial, but this is not the fact, as he appears to have been tried shortly before my despatch was written, but the news had not then reached Aleppo.

He has been sentenced to imprisonment for life, and from all I have been able to gather as to his offence, it appears to be a cruel and unwarrantable sentence. Hohannes Shamlian, his son, is said to have engaged in correspondence with certain prisoners in Adana gaol, and the correspondence fell into the hands of a zaptieh named Hassan. It is stated that this zaptieh was surprised by a party of Armenians, murdered, and the papers taken from him, and that the actual murderer took refuge in the farm of Boghos Shamlian at Soghoonlook, near Beilan. He was at once arrested, with his son and nephew, and subjected to cruel treatment on the road to prison. The offence of Boghos Shamlian was therefore that of harbouring a refugee from justice, perhaps

unintentionally. Moreover, I am assured that the zaptieh was not really killed, and is now alive.

I spoke to the American Consul about this case some weeks ago. No information has been received here as to sentence having been passed upon Hohannes and Heitoun Shamlian, nor upon the other prisoners mentioned in my list who were arrested for complicity in the same affair.

Boghos Shamlian had the reputation of being an honest man. He is about 50 years of age, and has seven children.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 381*.

Lord Cromer to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 17.*)

(No. 72.)
Cairo, June 8, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Suez, reporting that the Russian Vice-Consul and the Chancelier of the French Consulate at Jeddah, who were recently attacked and wounded by Bedouins, have arrived at Suez, and are being treated in the French hospital.

I have, &c.
(Signed) CROMER.

Inclosure in No. 381*.

Vice-Consul Norrish to Lord Cromer.

Suez, June 7, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to report to your Lordship that the Russian Vice-Consul and the Chancelier of the French Consulate, who were attacked and seriously wounded by supposed Bedouins at Jeddah on the evening of the 30th ultimo, arrived here yesterday afternoon by the French steam-ship "Gallia," and are now at the French hospital undergoing treatment. Both these gentlemen are badly wounded in the face.

I have, &c.
(Signed) J. R. NORRISH.

No. 382.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 17.*)

(No. 373.)
Constantinople, June 11, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a paper which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch in regard to the situation at Sivas and Tokat.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 382.

Paper communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

LA SITUATION À SIVAS.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 6 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Sivas.*

UN incident grave, qui prouve la situation intolérable à laquelle sont livrés les détenus Arméniens se trouvant dans la prison de Sivas, a eu lieu le 27 du mois écoulé.

Depuis longtemps, les prisonniers Turcs avaient pris l'habitude de maltraiter leurs codétenus Arméniens, et de pénibles incidents avaient lieu. Le jour sus-indiqué, un

détenu Turc, ayant ordonné à un prisonnier Arménien de lui donner la chaise sur laquelle celui-ci s'était assis, l'Arménien a répondu qu'il existait dans la salle plusieurs chaises inoccupées, qu'on pouvait par conséquent en prendre une pour s'asseoir. Cette réponse a mis en colère le Turc, qui s'est jeté sur son interlocuteur et les autres prisonniers Arméniens, et leur a donné la bastonnade. Les autres détenus Turcs, qui possédaient tous des couteaux, malgré la défense formelle de la loi, suivant l'exemple de leur coreligionnaire, ont attaqué les Arméniens avec leurs armes, en présence du Directeur de la prison et des gardiens, qui, spectateurs insouciants de cet incident, n'ont rien fait pour le prévenir.

Huit prisonniers Arméniens ont été blessés, dont trois grièvement. Il n'y a aucun blessé Turc. Ce bilan seul suffit pour établir les responsabilités.

L'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne a sollicité que les détenus Chrétiens soient séparés des Musulmans, comme cela se pratique dans plusieurs autres villes; mais ses démarches n'ont abouti à aucun résultat.

Résumé d'un autre Rapport en date du 6 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Sivas.*

Le 2 du mois courant on conduisait à la prison un Arménien nommé Osgan Tchékemyan, coupable de n'avoir pas payé sa dette provenant d'impôts, par suite de son extrême misère. Le dit Tchékemyan a été battu de la manière la plus cruelle devant le han dit de Hadji Ahmed Bey, par l'agent de police qui l'accompagnait. Cet agent a dégainé son sabre d'ordonnance et aurait sans doute tué le prisonnier, si plusieurs habitants de la localité, parmi lesquels se trouvaient aussi des Turcs, n'avaient sauvé le pauvre Arménien des mains de l'agent. Celui-ci voyant cette intervention a crié, "Pourquoi vous mêlez-vous de l'affaire? Croyez-vous que le Gouvernement me ferait la moindre réprimande si je tuais ce Guiavour?"

L'agent de police accusait cet Arménien d'avoir tenté de s'échapper de ses mains. La pauvre victime de cette injustice a été conduite à la prison, où elle est restée plusieurs jours.

L'agent de police n'a pas même été inquiété.

Cet incident n'est qu'une manifestation presque insignifiante de l'esprit qui prévaut dans la population Turque. Il y a urgence absolue de s'adresser à des mesures énergiques si l'on veut prévenir des malheurs autrement grands. La perte de chaque minute pourrait avoir des conséquences funestes; car les Turcs, aveuglés par le fanatisme le plus intransigeant, peuvent commettre les excès les plus graves.

La Situation à Tokat.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 17 Avril (v. s.), *arrivé de Tokat.*

Des vingt-neuf prisonniers Arméniens qui se trouvaient dans la prison de Tokat, au commencement de l'année courante, huit ont été acquittés le 26 du mois écoulé, par le Tribunal. Voici les noms de ces personnes qui étaient accusées d'avoir coupé le fil télégraphique, lors du fameux incident de l'attaque de la poste:—

Haroutioun, Pabouteldjian, Kirkor Momdjian, Haroutioun, Kalousdian, originaires de Tokat; Haroutioun Hovsepian, Avédis Kalousdian, Hovagnime Hovsepian, Simon Topalian, Kirkor Guendjian, originaires du village de Varass.

Ces personnes avaient été arrêtées uniquement sur la dénonciation d'un berger Turc qui, ayant plus tard avoué au Commissaire-en-chef de la Police que son accusation était une simple calomnie, avait été battu et chassé par le dit Commissaire.

Malgré cet aveu du dénonciateur, le Gouvernement a maintenu pendant huit mois l'arrestation de ces pauvres gens, ne consentant pas même à élargir, en acceptant des garants, l'un d'entre eux, qui était gravement malade.

Les incidents les plus pénibles, conséquences de la politique vexatoire du Gouvernement et de la recrudescence du fanatisme parmi les Turcs, continuent d'avoir lieu. En voici quelques exemples, sur lesquels nous attirons l'attention la plus sérieuse:—

1. Sur une dénonciation sans fondement, le 24 Mars passé, le Gouvernement a fait assiéger nuitamment le village Bustundjik par de nombreux soldats, accompagnés d'une horde de Bachi-Bozouks Turcs. Le prétexte de ce procédé était la recherche de bandes de fugitifs. Rien n'a été trouvé et les soldats ainsi que les Bachi-Bozouks se sont retournés bredouilles; mais ces recherches ont tellement effrayé la population du village que plusieurs sont devenus malades. Il est vraiment étonnant qu'après les déplorables expériences des incidents de Tokat, le Gouvernement continue à faire exercer des recherches sur de simples dénonciations et à faire accompagner les soldats par des Bachi-Bozouks.

2. Le 25 Mars, plusieurs Turcs sont entrés nuitamment dans le moulin nommé Djermik-Tchour, très proche de la ville et après avoir blessé le nommé Képork Djelludian qui s'y trouvait, se sont emparés de tout ce qu'il avait et se sont enfuis, sans nullement inquiéter un ouvrier Turc, qui passait également la nuit dans le même moulin. Les auteurs de ce méfait ont été trouvés et les objets volés saisis. Les preuves les plus éclatantes de leur crime existent, mais le Gouvernement, au lieu de procéder à la punition des coupables, a appelé la victime et lui a ordonné, sous des menaces, de ne pas aller se plaindre à l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne.

3. Dans la nuit du 12 Mars, vers 6 heures à la Turque, dix Bachi-Bozouks, Turcs et Tcherkess, sont entrés de force dans un moulin, situé à une heure de distance du village de Bolis, dans le district d'Ardova. Cette horde a démoli une partie du toit et des murs pour pouvoir pénétrer dans la bâtisse où les sept Arméniens occupés de faire moudre leur blé, ont été effrayés par des coups de fusils et par les cris des assaillants, qui déclaraient avoir droit à tous les biens des Guiavours, et qui, non contents de s'emparer de tous les biens et des habits même des Arméniens, les ont très cruellement battus avec les crosses de leurs fusils et avec des gourdins.

4. Le 24 Mars, un Tcherkess étant entré dans un bercail, situé à une heure et demie de distance du village de Bolis et propriété du nommé Hampartzoum Déirmendjian, avait enlevé les meubles qui s'y trouvaient. Les frères de Hampartzoum ont poursuivi le Tcherkess et ont réussi à reprendre les meubles volés.

Le voleur se voyant ainsi privé de son butin est allé au village Turc de Khizik, dont il a excité les habitants contre les Arméniens. Ces paysans, armés de fusils et de sabres se sont mis à poursuivre les frères de Hampartzoum, en criant: "Guiavours, il ne vous restait déjà que deux jours; nous ferons aujourd'hui ce que nous nous étions promis de faire deux jours après." Plusieurs coups de fusil ont été tirés; heureusement personne n'a été blessée.

(D'autres rapports font connaître que la menace d'un massacre général des Chrétiens est proférée journellement par les Turcs des autres villages de Tokat.)

5. Le 17 Mars dans le village de Niksar, par suite d'une dette de 5 piastres, un Turc nommé Chukri a battu un enfant Arménien de 9 ans, qui le priait d'attendre quelques minutes le débiteur, son père, qui viendrait lui rembourser l'argent.

Le cousin de l'enfant, âgé de 15 ans, s'étant interposé pour sauver la victime, a été également battu.

Les boutiquiers Arméniens de l'endroit ont pu momentanément apaiser le forcené en lui offrant le café, suivant l'usage du pays; mais plus tard une horde de plus de 100 Turcs est venue dans le marché où se trouvait le magasin du débiteur et a commencé à proférer les plus terribles menaces, en cherchant les deux enfants. On disait que les Chrétiens n'avaient plus que trois jours à vivre et qu'on pouvait sans inconvénient les tuer avant ce délai; heureusement que la police est arrivée à temps pour prévenir l'aggravation des faits.

La nuit de cet incident et les jours suivants, plusieurs Turcs notables de Niksar, ont formé des conciliabules avec les Ulémas professant dans les Médressés du dit village, pour préparer une attaque générale du quartier Arménien; cette attaque avait été organisée sur une vaste échelle et les chefs de chaque groupe indiqués. Heureusement, les Arméniens ayant appris cette intention des Turcs, se sont adressés au Caïmacam, qui a pu prévenir l'attaque par des mesures énergiques; pourtant la population Chrétienne de Niksar se trouve toujours en danger.

6. Dans la journée du 16 Avril, dans le quartier d'Ertunéli de Tokat, la dame Thérèse, épouse de Harontioun Abouchian, invitée par une voisine Turque, a été introduite en guet-apens dans la cave de la maison de celle-ci.

La femme Turque a fermé la porte de la cave sur la pauvre dame et s'est éloignée. Judik Tchak-Oglou, qui se trouvait dans la cave, s'est alors jeté sur Thérèse, qu'il a outragée. Plus tard il a fait avaler de force à cette dame une grande quantité d'eau de vie et l'a ainsi mise dans un état d'ivresse complète. Profitant de cet état de la pauvre femme, il l'a couverte d'un tcharchaf et l'a conduite dans un jardin situé à proximité,

où cinq autres Turcs l'ont également outragée. Après ces forfaits, la pauvre dame a été jetée dans un ravin, et serait sans doute morte, si des agents de police, arrivés à temps, ne l'avaient sauvée.

L'honnêteté de la femme Thérèse ne peut être contestée. Son mari a porté plainte, mais aucun des auteurs de cette inqualifiable outrage n'a été arrêté.

Extrait du même Rapport.

Depuis l'incident du 7 Mars (v. s.), malgré quelques mesures de précaution auxquelles le Gouvernement s'est adressé, la menace d'un massacre général des Chrétiens se généralise de jour en jour. Le Gouvernement fait circuler des patrouilles de soldats, espérant ainsi inspirer la confiance à la population; mais celle-ci, après les tristes expériences des journées du 20 Août, 1894, et du 7 Mars de l'année courante, sachant à quoi s'en tenir au sujet de la protection que ces patrouilles pourraient offrir, est effrayé plus que jamais. L'un des blessés des incidents du 7 Mars, le nommé Mendzik Djansouzian, vient de succomber aux suites de ses blessures. Trente Arméniens se trouvent actuellement dans les cachots par suite de ces incidents, et le Gouvernement s'adresse à toutes les ruses possibles pour prolonger leur captivité et pour les faire condamner, tandis que les seize Turcs qui avaient été arrêtés ont presque tous recouvert leur liberté par des ordonnances de non-lieu, ou par décision du Tribunal.

Les injustices commises par l'autorité judiciaire deviennent d'ailleurs de jour en jour criardes, et les jugements sont empreints de l'esprit de partialité qui préside à la politique du Gouvernement.

Des cinquante Turcs qui, tous armés, avaient assiégé la maison de Garabeth Chirinian, six personnes seulement ont été mises en jugement et le Tribunal s'est contenté de condamner l'un d'eux à un mois et demi d'emprisonnement.

Lors du procès, le nommé Chirinian, qui devait être cité comme partie civile, n'a pas été invité au Tribunal. Il y avait un témoin Turc de nom de Kahraman qui, pour acquit de conscience, avait déclaré vouloir dire la vérité; mais l'autorité judiciaire sachant que la déposition de ce témoin serait favorable aux Arméniens, a fait remettre la citation à un autre Turc portant le même nom, lequel est venu déclarer n'avoir rien vu et rien su de l'affaire.

Un autre Turc qui avait arrêté le nommé Harontioun Kazakian, lorsque celui-ci se rendait à sa vigne et qui, passant une courroie au cou de cet Arménien, avait crié: "Moi aussi je vais tuer un Guiavour, pour mon compte," n'a été condamné qu'à vingt jours de prison.

Le Tribunal a voulu présenter cette affaire comme une simple rixe, tandis que la préméditation d'assassinat avait été dûment prouvée.

Des quarante Turcs qui avaient attaqué les Arméniens nommés Képork Topalian et Mourad Vartéressian, une seule personne a été mise en jugement et condamnée à deux mois de prison.

Le curieux de l'affaire est que les deux Arméniens précités ont été condamnés à la même peine, pour avoir porté des armes afin de pouvoir se défendre en cas de besoin, quoiqu'ils n'en aient fait aucun usage.

Le 15 du mois courant a commencé le procès des personnes accusées d'avoir participé aux incidents du 7 Mars.

Le Tribunal fait tout son possible pour acquitter les Turcs et condamner les Arméniens. Le procès n'est pas encore terminé.

No. 383.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 17.*)

(No. 374.) *Constantinople, June 11, 1895.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my despatch No. 361 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, inclosing copy of a despatch from Her

Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van reporting the sentences of the prisoners in the Bogaz-Kessen case.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 383.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, May 30, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 21st instant, and preceding despatches, I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting the sentence of six of the prisoners in the Bogaz-Kessen case to terms of five and three years imprisonment, and the acquittal of the remaining prisoners.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 383.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, May 22, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to my despatch of the 14th instant respecting the Bogaz-Kessen case, I have the honour to report that sentence was passed last week by the Criminal Court condemning Hachadour Natanian, of Van, to five years' imprisonment and five of the villagers to three years' imprisonment. The rest of the prisoners have been acquitted.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 384.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 376.) *Therapia, June* 10, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a despatch from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Baghdad in regard to injuries sustained by the Chaldean Christians of Peshkhabour at the hands of Mustafa Pasha, the Chief of the Miran nomad tribe and of Agha Tsor of Shirmak.

This information has been confirmed by Her Majesty's Acting Vice-Consul at Diarbekir in his despatch of the 18th ultimo, of which I also inclose a copy; and I am now communicating the facts to my French and Russian colleagues with a view to inviting them to join in a representation to the Sublime Porte.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 384.

Consul-General Mockler to Sir P. Currie.

Baghdad, March 2, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to respectfully submit, for your Excellency's information, copy (in translation) of a news report received from the British Consular Agent at Mosul.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MOCKLER, *Colonel.*

Inclosure 2 in No. 384.

Mr. Bassam to Consul-General Mockler.

Mosul, February 21, 1895.

(Translation.)

THE tribe of Herkich Kurds, having joined certain rebellious characters from the tribes of the district of Zibar, made an attack upon the people of the district of Mazuri, a dependency of Dhok, and killed about six men and plundered no inconsiderable number of cattle and property.

Some people from the village of Fishapoor, in the district of Jezireh within the Vilayet of Diarbekir, of which the inhabitants are Christians, came here to represent to their Patriarch the injuries they sustain at the hands of Musto Pasha, the Chief of the Kochar (migratory tribe), of Miran, and of Agha Soor, and other Chiefs of Kurds of those localities, for they always make attacks upon the village and plunder whatever they find, of grain, property, and cattle, so much so that they could no more bear. The authorities neither assist nor take notice of their complaints; they have therefore, in order to save themselves from leading such a life, decided to abandon their landed properties and native place and go to the district of Zamar, which is a portion of the lands of the Crown, if this their condition continue in this way without protection.

The local authorities of this place intend, under orders from Constantinople, to build a town at Hadhr for the occupation of the emigrants from Roumeli, who are expected to arrive here.

Inclosure 3 in No. 384.

Acting Vice-Consul Boyajian to Sir P. Currie.

Diarbekir, May 18, 1895.

Sir,

WITH reference to your Excellency's despatch of the 22nd ultimo calling for information respecting injuries sustained by the Chaldean Christians of Peshkhabour at the hands of Mustafa Pasha, the Chief of the Miran nomad tribe, and of another Kurdish Chief, Agha Isor, of Shirmak, I beg, respectfully, leave to state that I could not obtain any information regarding that particular case, though a very careful inquiry was made by me into the subject. But, judging from the antecedents of the said Pasha, I may submit to your Excellency that there can scarcely be any doubt of the truth of the statement made by the Delegates sent from the Christians of the village in question to the Chaldean Patriarch at Mosul.

Mustafa Pasha has ruined not only that but also a great many other prosperous villages, both Christian and Moslem, in the neighbourhood of Djezireh, and indeed, as he, together with his people, lives in the winter season in the district just mentioned, and migrates to the districts of Van in the summer, in passing backwards and forwards all the villages on his route sustain injury, and a great many become completely ruined.

Very serious accusations have been brought against him, but through the influence of a long purse he has obtained his acquittal.

Among other charges may be mentioned that of his having caused the burning of the Imperial Farm in the vilayet of Mosul, and through obvious means he procured again his acquittal.

He was accused of other grave crimes, to expiate which he offered to form two battalions of Hamidieh auxiliaries from his own people. His offer was accepted, and he became their General Commander.

Last year he murdered one of the Notables of the Miran tribe, and also his two children. These being related to Agha Isor and another Kurdish tribe, a fight ensued, in which several more fell on each side. Mustafa Pasha was not even questioned, and Agha Isor received orders from higher quarters to make peace with the said Pasha.

Mustafa also inflicted some injuries upon several innocent Moslems while passing through the village of Peshkhabour on their way to Baghdad for pilgrimage; for which they petitioned the Government, but without result. Were it not that I fear to trespass on your Excellency's valuable time, I would cite many instances of rapine,

atrocities, murders, and other crimes committed by this man, equally upon Moslems and Christians. He was already a daring lawless man, and now that he belongs to the Hamidieh forces, he considers himself not amenable to public law or justice.

Your Excellency will undoubtedly gather from all the above statements that the person in question is a most dangerous character wandering about between this and the Van Vilayet, and not only the inhabitants of the vilayets, but the Government authorities, including the Governors-General, though they do not dare to say so, are most anxious that the man should be punished, and that all the regiments of Hamidieh under his command should be abolished, as they are proving to be most injurious to the tranquillity of the vilayets, and thus causing great anxiety to those in authority.

With your Excellency's permission, I have to add that Agha Isor also is a man of a dangerous stamp. His district belongs to the Bitlis Vilayet. He was sent to exile by the Commissioners of Reforms in 1879, who considered him as one of the most mischievous men in the vilayet, but he was afterwards sent back with marked honour, and since then his conduct has been worse than it was before.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS BOYAJIAN.

No. 385.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 378.)

Constantinople, June 13, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a paper I have received from the Armenian Patriarch in regard to the events which have taken place at Sassoon and the want which exists in the Valley of Moush.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 385.

Paper communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

LES AFFAMÉS DE SASSOUN.

La Disette dans la Vallée de Mouche.

Extrait d'un Rapport en date du 10 Mai (v. s.), arrivé de Mouché.

APRÈS le départ des régiments de l'armée régulière et des tribus Kurdes, qui avaient perpétré les massacres de Sassoun, les rares personnes qui avaient réussi d'y échapper, ont enfin osé de quitter les cachettes, où elles s'étaient refugiées.

Une minime partie de cette population si éprouvée s'est installée sur les plateaux, dans les défilés et dans les forêts de Sassoun, tandis que la grande majorité émigrait à Mouche, d'où elle s'est dispersée dans les villages Arméniens de la vallée; les Arméniens de la ville et des villages ont hébergé et nourri ces pauvres sinistrés tant qu'ils en avaient le moyen, mais étant eux-mêmes doublement éprouvés par les exactions du Gouvernement Ottoman et par la disette factice qui règne depuis plus de deux ans dans le pays, leurs modestes ressources se sont vite épuisées et ils se sont trouvés dans l'impossibilité de se subvenir. Cette situation a obligé les sinistrés de Sassoun de quitter leurs hôtes et de tâcher de trouver des expédients pour vivre.

Plusieurs d'entre eux se sont retirés dans les montagnes, où ils se sont nourris avec des herbes et des feuilles; d'autres ont commencé à mendier dans les villages, trouvant avec de grandes difficultés un morceau de pain afin de ne pas mourir d'inanition. On avait déjà passé l'hiver dans un grand dénuement; aujourd'hui la situation a encore empiré et cette malheureuse population se trouve absolument affamée.

Des renseignements de sources absolument véridiques [?] que des morts par manque de vivres et de la misère qui résulte de cette situation, ont eu lieu. Il est

impossible d'en citer tous les cas; mais la liste ci-jointe, bien incomplète d'ailleurs, montre qu'après les massacres de Sassoun le Gouvernement a persisté à travailler à l'anéantissement complet des montagnards, en les privant des secours les plus élémentaires que l'humanité et la charité dictaient.

Ces mêmes renseignements signalent la situation terrible à laquelle sera réduite cette population, l'hiver prochain, s'il n'est pas remédié dans le plus bref délai possible, à l'état de choses actuel.

Sans habitations, dépourvus de bestiaux et d'instruments agricoles, n'ayant semé la moindre poignée de blé, la misère la plus noire, accompagnée d'une famine, bien réelle cette fois-ci, régnera pour eux et un anéantissement complet en résultera pour la vaillante population Arménienne de Sassoun.

Liste nominative de quelques-uns des émigrés de Sassoun, morts de faim et de misère dans la Vallée de Mouche et aux environs:—

Khatcho Sétoyan, originaire de Otey Guzan.
Séroji Stépoyan.
La demoiselle Tcghikzom, fille de Mardiross.
Daniel Kerkéyan.
Tatar Mikoyan.
Nergo, épouse de Tuno.
Guiro, fils de Tuno.
La demoiselle Nourée, fille d'Ayé.
" Rea, fille de Sarkiss.
Hairab d Kévoyan.
Archag Serkissian.
Arsén d Kaloyan.
Mardiross Yeghoyan.
Khatché, fille d'Erko.
Furhu Douéyan.
Khatché, fille d'Ovagé.
Erko Megréyan.
La demoiselle Mariam, fille de Boghoss.
" Agrouth, fille de Hadjo.
" Hafgamoueh, fille de Markó.
Yegho Boghossian, originaire de Sémal.
Soghé Boghossian.
Les enfants Bedros et Sahak d'Osmani-Harten.
La demoiselle Eghissé d'Osmani-Harten.
Hatchad, âgé de 8 ans } fils de Kaspar
Mekhitar, âgé de 12 ans } Kaloyan.
La dame Koukée, épouse de Kerké-Sako, tué lors des massacres.
Serak son fils, Makée sa fille.
Arkine, fille de Hatemi-Charo.
Soghatiel, fils d'Apré.
La demoiselle Sarafé, fille de Tano Saforian.
La demoiselle Chouchan, fille de Hohan, frère du précédent.
Hovo Khamoyan.
La demoiselle Koukée, cousine du précédent.
Merlé, fils de Guiro, originaire de Chenek.
Khatcho Guiragossian, originaire de Hitenk.
Khouto Hagopian.
La demoiselle Réhime, fille de Mugare.
" Mayrée, fille de Pourtoo.
Marko Kaléyan.
La dame Mayrée, épouse de Hatcho.
" Hilto, épouse de Touma.
La demoiselle Sahrée, leur fille.
La dame Nargatse, épouse d'Agvo Tano.
&c., &c.

Un Épilogue des Événements de Sassoun.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 9 Mai (v. s.); 1895, arrivé de Diarbékir.

Après les massacres de Sassoun, plusieurs habitants des districts éprouvés, qui avaient pu se sauver, s'étaient réfugiés à Alep, à Diarbékir, ainsi qu'à quelques autres localités.

Cinquante-cinq personnes de ceux qui avaient cherché refuge à Alep, sont venus de là à Diarbékir et s'étant assurés la protection d'un Chef de tribu Kurde, sont partis d'ici pour rentrer dans leur pays. Ces sinistrés qui avaient réussi à sauver des mains des assaillants une partie de leurs biens, avaient, lors de leur départ, plus de £T. 1,000 en espèces, et des marchandises d'une valeur supérieure à £T. 400.

Ils sont arrivés sain et sauf à Becherik, où ils ont remis une lettre adressée par Hassan Agha, Chef Kurde, à son frère Rezgo Agha, qui s'est mis à la tête du caravan, en compagnie de vingt autres Kurdes, afin de le protéger, conformément aux recommandations de son frère. On a continué le voyage sans aucun incident, jusqu'au village de Boloud, dépendant du district de Nakliban, dans le pays de Kharzan. Là, les Chefs Kurdes Mahmadé-Malé, Hussoné-Félith, Pourté Kéko, Khotiw, Fakli-Ali, Charo, Youssoufé-Ammo, appartenant au groupement d'Achirètes dit de Richeotan, accompagnés d'une horde composée des membres de leurs tribus, sont venus auprès des Arméniens. Ils ont dit à Rezgo qu'il ne devait pas protéger les Arméniens dont la vie et les biens dépendaient des Kurdes et dont ceux-ci devaient boire le sang, et l'ont invité à les laisser libres d'attaquer les voyageurs.

Après deux heures de pourparlers, Rezgo a cru les avoir convaincus. On s'est

séparé sur l'assurance donnée par les dits Chefs de ne pas revenir sur leur chemin. On a continué durant un quart d'heure encore le voyage, quand les Kurdes ont tout d'un coup attaqué le caravan. Cette fois encore Rezgo a voulu agir avec prudence; il leur a conseillé de retourner sans commettre aucun méfait; mais les assaillants ne l'ont nullement écouté; l'attaque a eu avec fureur et plusieurs des voyageurs Arméniens, ainsi que les Kurdes qui les accompagnaient, ont été blessés; 200 autres Kurdes appartenant au même groupement de Richotan, ayant rejoint les assaillants, ceux-ci ont emmené de force cinquante-trois des voyageurs, ainsi que les muletiers Arméniens, qui les accompagnaient, vers leur pays. Deux Arméniens, dont l'un grièvement blessé et le Chef Rezgo, s'étant sauvés, ont rapporté les faits à Diarbékir. Les hommes de Rezgo sont arrivés sur les lieux vers le tard, quand il commençait à faire nuit; ils étaient d'ailleurs en très petit nombre comparativement aux assaillants, dont le nombre s'élevait à 400.

Actuellement on n'a aucun renseignement de ces pauvres voyageurs; on ne sait pas s'ils ont été tués ou se trouvent vivants; et les émigrés de Sassoun habitant Diarbékir déplorent avec raison ce triste épilogue des événements d'Août 1894.

La Situation à Kourou-Tchay.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 8 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé du Village de Petit-Armedan (Vilayet d'Erzeroum).*

En laissant à une autre occasion la description de la situation intolérable, à laquelle nous continuons d'être livrés, nous signalerons aujourd'hui quelques cas de cruauté, qui prouveront, une fois de plus, combien les affaires ont encore empiré dans ces derniers temps:—

1. Un mendiant Arménien, père de six enfants, porteur d'un certificat en due forme, délivré par l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne de Devrik, a été arrêté ici, sous la prévention d'être un émissaire révolutionnaire et, sans aucune enquête, envoyé à Erzindjan. Il a été chargé de chaînes tellement lourdes et les geôliers lui ont fait subir de tels mauvais traitements, qu'il est mort avant de pouvoir se présenter aux Tribunaux et prouver son innocence.

2. Le nommé Kévork Hatchadourian, âgé de 25 ans, qui avait réussi à échapper de la prison d'Erzindjan, où il se trouvait détenu pour cause politique, a été arrêté, dans le courant du Février passé, dans la maison de l'un de ses proches parents. Les agents de police ont attaché ses mains sur le dos et l'ayant conduit, dans cette position à une heure de distance hors du village, l'ont tué par deux coups de pistolet, après lui avoir délié les poignées. Le corps a été amené au village et enterré à la hâte, sans aucun examen médical. Les gendarmes ont prétexté que le prisonnier s'étant mis à s'enfuir, ils l'avaient tué, en poursuivant; mais aucune trace de fuite n'a été constatée aux alentours de la localité où la victime de cette tuerie était tombée.

3. Depuis six mois, deux Arméniens se trouvent emprisonnés à Kouron-Tchay, chef-lieu de notre district, sous l'accusation d'avoir procuré du pain et des vivres à des révolutionnaires. Aucune enquête sérieuse n'a été exercée sur leur cas. Plusieurs autres Arméniens ont été pressurés sous le même prétexte. Les riches ont pu se sauver, en contentant la cupidité des fonctionnaires et les pauvres gémissent dans les cachots.

4. La question des veilleurs de nuit, nommés il y a quelque temps, continue à causer le mécontentement parmi les Arméniens, pour lesquels le gage payé à ces veilleurs constitue un nouvel impôt. Il se trouve actuellement six veilleurs au Grand-Armedan, quatre au Petit-Armedan, deux à Toughoud et deux à Hassan-Ova. La population qui n'a pas de quoi à payer ses impôts, ne sait comment s'acquitter de cette nouvelle charge.

No. 386.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 17.*)

(No. 379.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 13, 1895.*

WITH reference to my despatch No. 190 of the 28th March last, and subsequent correspondence, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo, in regard to an Armenian revolutionary movement near Suedia.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 386.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.)
Sir, *Aleppo, June 1, 1895.*

REFERRING to my despatches of the 11th March and the 4th April last, and to my telegram of the 30th ultimo, in which I reported to your Excellency that a boat containing 400 rifles was seized by the authorities last Sunday on the coast between Alexandretta and Latakia, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that Mr. Sanders, the gentleman referred to in my despatches as my informant, is now with me, and I take the opportunity of laying before you in as complete a form as possible the history and development of this revolutionary movement from its very inception.

There are two regions involved. The first includes in Moosa Dagh, the mountain district north of the Orontes, the villages of Bitias, Hadji, Habib, Yoghoonlook, Hadr Beg, and Keboosé. The second is the large Armenian village of Kessab, with its outlying districts on the south-eastern slope of Mount Cassius, on the south side of the Orontes.

So far as I am informed these villages had not been affected at all by Armenian troubles prior to the summer of 1894. They have had friendly relations with the leading Mussulmans of Antioch, and, in Kessab, with the chief Moslems of the Kaimakamlik of Djisr Shogr.

It cannot be denied that in the matter of taxes they have been treated mildly, and, in the collection of taxes, have suffered less than their non-Christian neighbours.

It appears that last summer one or two young men in the villages commenced a correspondence with members of the Hunchag Society, but it is not clear whether they corresponded directly with the Central Committee, or with the person who subsequently became their leader. This was a young man named Yesaiya (Isaiah) Karikian, said to have been about 24 years of age, and to have once resided in France. The leadership of Isaiah Karikian was succeeded by that of a person whom he had met on his travels and invited to Suedia, and who is the present leader of the movement in the villages. This person's name is Aghassé, who, from the moment of his arrival, has been the leading spirit in the whole affair. He has claimed that he is a Russian subject, but I believe from good authority that he is of Ottoman nationality, and a native of Hadjin, in the Vilayet of Adana. The name is probably assumed, but to assist his identification, I may state that he was one of the Armenians implicated in the Koum Kapon riot at Constantinople. By means of the French Post at Alexandretta, and a system of special messengers, managed with great skill, he has had constant communication with the Hunchak (Huncharan) Society, and the amount of mail he has received at one time (I am told some weeks forty letters, more or less), would show a very wide communication with outside.

At first his only companion in the propagation of sedition was the man principally concerned in that affair at Alexandretta (which led to the arrest of Boghos Shamlian), the man who is stated to have killed a zaptieh, who had seized letters written to prisoners at Adana by Hohannes Shamlian, and who took refuge in the farm of Boghos Shamlian, at Soghoonlook, see my despatch of the 30th ultimo. I am at the moment unable to state his name.

Yesaiya Karikian, Aghassé, and the person just described, started the movement.

At first they lived in great fear, and spent most of their time in the mountains. The villagers at first received them with coldness and distrust; but they gradually made their way, and with such care that boys were frequently drawn into the movement without the slightest suspicion on the part of their parents.

When the Sassoon massacre became known at Suedia the movement obtained a great impetus. The argument that, unless they armed, their wives and children would be butchered, was used with great effect, and men would part with everything they had in order to obtain money enough to buy shot-guns and revolvers. When Mr. Sanders visited the villages in February and March nearly all the Armenians were enrolled, and there was a state of excitement, which threatened to end in an immediate collision with the authorities, but was prevented, in my opinion, by Mr. Sanders' presence and good advice.

Aghassé's every word was received as an inspired utterance. He had told them that thousands of Armenians were drilling in America, that abundant supplies of Martini rifles were coming, that the English and American Governments were about to interfere on their behalf by force of arms, and many similar statements of a misleading and dangerous character. Considerable money had been collected, and in the Moosa Dagh villages the young men were drilling eagerly, the drill-master being Aghassé, who had somewhere picked up some military knowledge. Aghassé, and some four or five companions, had rifles at that time, the others had shot-guns.

A small party, however, in the village of Yoghoonlook were waiting for Mr. Sanders' arrival, with the object of testing Aghassé's assertions before committing themselves to the movement, and he had by judicious advice persuaded them to have nothing to do with it.

On the 4th March Mr. Sanders had an interview with some of the leading villagers at Bitias, which resulted in the formation of a strong anti-revolutionary party, and had similar secret interviews with the villagers of Hadji, Habibli, and Yoghoonlook on the following days.

He left for Kessab on the 15th March. The foreign revolutionists never visited that village in person, but were in constant communication with it. However, on the 4th or 5th April the villagers of Kessab sent word to Aghassé, through his Lieutenant Karikian, that they refused absolutely to have anything to do with the revolution, or even to contribute money. At the time Mr. Sanders left Kessab (20th May) that village was to a man opposed to the movement. But in the meantime, just three weeks ago, a party of seventeen revolutionists had landed on the coast from Cyprus, and last Sunday a boat containing Martini rifles (said to be 400) was seized on the Suedia coast. Three other boats containing fire-arms escaped.

It appears, then, that unwilling as these villagers are to join in the movement, they are being forced into it by the action of a handful of outsiders, who operate from a point on the Suedia coast, which I have attempted to indicate in the following sketch map, and pass to and fro by sailing-boat between that point and some unknown point on the coast of Cyprus.

The party of seventeen who landed at the spot called Chevlek three weeks ago are represented as having with them seven or eight rifles, a number of revolvers known here as Kara Dagh (imitation of a very large Smith and Wesson), and some ninety bombs. Whether these bombs were loaded or not is not known, but they have been described to Mr. Sanders by many different persons, and every description tallies; round iron balls, of a diameter of about 6 inches, armed with nine nipples, any one of which they say would explode the bomb when it came in contact with the ground. This party of seventeen consisted entirely of Armenians, some of whom at least were from America,* and it does not appear that any were from Transcaucasia.

In the presence of these new comers many of the villagers who were wavering have no doubt thrown in their lot with the revolutionists. I may mention as a curious fact that several Greeks of Suedia have joined the movement.

A friend of Mr. Sanders in Suedia told him that on the evening of Sunday, the 17th May, he noticed a boat taking a very unusual tack out in the roadstead. It attracted his attention, and he saw it run over to Jebel Akra (Mount Cassius), and disappear in a cleft there, and the same night he heard that a large number of rifles had been landed. He supposes this tack was taken to draw away the Turkish guard from the north side of the Orontes, after which a boat, perhaps the same one, would slip by in the darkness, and land the arms at Chevlek.

Besides the few Greeks I have mentioned the Nusireyeh, who inhabit almost

* Two have American passports.

entirely the villages of the Suedia Plain, have become interested in the movement, but I believe they have as yet taken no active steps in the matter.

The situation is a most anxious one, and I can but trust that the Government will deal wisely with it. The agents, who are probably at most some thirty or forty, deserve to be severely punished, but the villagers have been made catspaws of, and might well be spared. Troops were sent to the Suedia district on Tuesday, the 27th ultimo, but I have received no news of arrests having been made, or of a collision having taken place with the villagers.

It is stated by the villagers that the Huncharan Society has members at Antioch, Aleppo, Aintab, Marash, Urfa, Hadjin, and Zeitoun, and when the party of seventeen landed, as described, three of the number were dispatched into the interior, and they had not, so far as was possible to ascertain, returned to Suedia when Mr. Sanders left.

The villagers state, among other things, that Aghassi had told them that 4,000 Armenians were coming to the district from Hadjin, Aintab, and Zeitoun.

I have communicated with the Government of Cyprus.

I have, &c.

(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 387.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 380.)

My Lord, *Therapia, June 13, 1895.*

ON receipt of your Lordship's despatch No. 209 of the 30th May requesting details as to the numbers of Armenian ecclesiastics still in prison or exile, I applied to the Patriarchate for information, and I have now the honour to transmit copy of a list with which they have furnished me.

I propose to take an early opportunity of calling the attention of the Sublime Porte to the members of the Armenian clergy still in prison.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 387.

List of the Members of the Armenian Clergy imprisoned or exiled.

CETTE liste est forcément incomplète, le Patriarcat n'étant pas régulièrement renseigné sur la situation du clergé des provinces, par suite de la dislocation de l'organisation spirituelle et des entraves soulevées par esprit de méfiance.

Ecclésiastiques emprisonnés ou exilés qui ont été laissés en liberté par suite de la récente amnistie:—

S. G. Garabeth, Évêque de Zeitoun.
S. G. Ohannès, Évêque de Hadjine.
S. G. Megueditch, Évêque d'Adana.
S. G. Yezaik, Évêque d'Arapguir.
S. G. Nigoghoss, Évêque de Fertiouz.
Le Très Révérend Nèrses, Métropolitain de Mouche.
" " Vartan, Métropolitain de Kemakh.
" " Abraham, Supérieur du Couvent de Sourpe Arakelotz à Mouche.
" " Simon, Métropolitain *ad interim* de Boulanik près de Mouche.
" " Ardalagues Adjemian.
" " Kevork, de la congrégation du Couvent de Sourpe Sgantchelakertz à Van.
" " Daniel, de la même congrégation.
" " Daniel, de la congrégation du Couvent du Dérévank à Césarée.
Le prêtre Garabeth, de Koran Tchai (près de Erzinjan).
" Mardéoss, de Bousseyidé (Sandjak de Chabine Karahissar).
" Ghévonth, de Zéitoun.
" Khatchadour, de Bayazide, se trouvant en dernier lieu en exil à Castamouni.
" Ner[illegible], d'Arapguir.
" Asvatzadour, de Touzlissar.
" Tatoul, du village de Martile, près de Tebarchambia.

Le prêtre Mikaël, du village de Chalgambi, près de Oulia.
" Nichan Movsessian, de Belen.
" Stépan Der Bedross-ian, de Belen.
" Yaghinaj Baloumi, de Guindj.
" Mamoré Lazian, de Mouche.
" Nersès, de Bayazide.
" Ohannès, de Khenouss.
" Serkis Manoukian, de Van.

(Ces ecclésiastiques sont arrivés à Constantinople et ont été livrés au Patriarcat Arménien.)

Ecclésiastiques se trouvant encore en prison ou en exil, malgré l'amnistie accordée :—

Le Très Révérend Mainpré, originaire de Mouche, exilé à Saint-Jean d'Acre.
" " Paregh Mangrian, originaire de Hadjine, exilé à Hossoun Kalé, près de Tripoli de Syrie.
" " Mélikséték, emprisonné à Sivas.
Le prêtre Kirkor, de Narman, emprisonné à Erzeroum.
" Stépan, d'Akrak, emprisonné à Erzeroum.
" Sarkess, du village de Khoy', dans le Sandjak de Mouche.
" Mesrop, de Van.
" Baghoss, d'Adana.
" Revork, de Polon.
" Ohannès, de Sivas.
" Yéghiché, de Sivas.
" Khatchadour, de Sivas.
Le diacre Moses, } de la congrégation de Sourpe Garabeth à Van.
" Haroutioun, }
Le prêtre Nichan, du village de Sidjik d'Equine, emprisonné à Equine.
Le diacre Bedross Setérian, } emprisonnés à Césarée.
Le sous-diacre Baghoss Demirdjian, }

Ces deux derniers exerçaient le professorat dans l'école de la localité, et ont été emprisonnés en cette qualité, mais ils appartiennent au clergé étant entrés dans les Ordres et ayant reçu la consécration.

No. 388.

Sir H. Wyndham to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 17.*)

(No. 50. Confidential.)
My Lord, *Bucharest, June 8, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to state that I have been for some days past endeavouring to obtain further information as to what purports to be a letter from the Armenian Committees in London and Marseilles, which formed the inclosure in my despatch No. 42, Confidential, of the 14th ultimo.

M. Ghika, the Secretary-General of the Department for Foreign Affairs, having informed me that the letter had been sent to his Department by M. Catargi, the Minister-President and Minister of the Interior, I took an opportunity a few days ago of asking his Excellency if he could give me any information on the subject. He appeared not to be acquainted with it, and I therefore wrote him a short private note giving the date of the newspaper, and observing that it would be interesting to know who the Archbishop Vehabétian was. I have the honour to inclose copy of his Excellency's reply, which does not throw much light on the matter, and which from its tone looks as if his Excellency wished to avoid entering upon the question.

I may mention that, before I saw M. Ghika on the 14th ultimo, I had desired Mr. Browne to try and see the editor of the "Patrie," but that he was unsuccessful. I however desired him to try again and see him, which he did on two occasions this week, and learnt from him that the letter had been communicated to him by the Turkish Minister here, and that he had inserted it in his paper as he had received it, but he could give no details, except that it had been found on Mgr. Vehabétian on his being arrested.

This afternoon, therefore, I called on my Turkish colleague, and I asked him if he could give me any information on the subject. Reschid Bey was good enough to read me a despatch from the Porte inclosing copy to him of the letter of which a précis has been published in the "Patrie," in order, it stated, to give him some idea of

the practices to which the Armenians were having recourse with a view to bring about disturbances in the Ottoman Empire. He went on to say, in reply to my inquiries, that this letter emanated from the Armenian Committees in London and Marseilles, that it was dated last August, and had been found on Mgr. Vehabétian, Armenian Archbishop of Adana, who was now in prison at Jerusalem, and that this letter had been circulated and read at all the Armenian Committees throughout the Ottoman Empire. I asked Reschid Bey if there were other Armenian Committees in Europe, and he replied that there was one at Geneva, where they had greater facilities than elsewhere for working, and that that Committee was in correspondence with the Armenian Committees in the Caucasus, which were, he said he would tell me confidentially, under the presidency of General Ignatieff.

I think it may be inferred from the reply given to my last question by Reschid Bey that M. Ghika had gathered the information he gave me on the 14th ultimo as to the Armenian Committee at Geneva, and as to their being in communication with persons in Russia, from the Turkish Minister here, as well as the other information on this subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HUGH WYNDHAM.

Inclosure in No. 388.

M. Catargi to Sir H. Wyndham.

Bucarest, le 23 Mai (4 Juin), 1895.

M. le Ministre,

JE m'empresse d'envoyer à votre Excellence le numéro de la "Patrie" du 20 Avril (2 Mai) courant, contenant l'article dont votre Excellence m'a parlé ce matin. Ainsi que votre Excellence pourra s'en apercevoir à première vue cet article n'est que la réédition de la lettre que les Comités Arméniens autant de Londres que de Marseille ont adressée à Mgr. Vehabétian, et qui a été trouvée chez ce dernier lorsqu'on a fait une perquisition chez lui. Le factum des Comités Arméniens de Londres devant sans doute être connu de votre Excellence depuis longtemps déjà je n'envoie l'article ci-inclus que pour mémoire.

Agréez, &c.
(Signé) L. CATARGI.

No. 389.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 17.*)

(No. 187.)
My Lord, *Vienna, June 13, 1895.*

YOUR Lordship is probably aware of the existence here of an institution called the "Press Bureau," which is under the control of the Imperial Government, and serves as a medium for the communication to the managers of the native press, and to the correspondents of foreign journals, of such information as the Government considers it desirable and useful to supply to them.

Several of the principal Vienna and Pesth newspapers have recently been giving the public to understand that the Austro-Hungarian Cabinet is not in accord with the Governments of Great Britain, France, and Russia as to their action at Constantinople in relation to the Armenian reforms; and I have noticed that the Vienna correspondent of the "Standard," a Hungarian Jew of the name of Frey, has been sending telegrams in the same sense to London.

Having therefore read yesterday morning in the "Standard" of Monday, the 10th instant, in a telegram from this gentleman, dated the 9th, that "he is now in a position positively to state that the procedure adopted by the three intervening Powers, especially by England, towards Turkey, does not fully meet with the approval of the Vienna Cabinet;" and further, "that it is held here, probably under the influence of Hungarian opinion, that to coerce the Sultan and to demand of him simply the acceptance, without delay or alteration, of what the three Powers think best for Armenia, is not conducive to the maintenance of the integrity of Turkey, and consequently not without danger to the peace of Europe." I thought it advisable to inquire of Count Goluchowski

whether there was any foundation for so categorical an assertion on the part of a journalist who is, I know, constantly in receipt of information from the "Press Bureau."

His Excellency at once gave the most positive denial to this mischievous assertion, and begged me to make it known to Her Majesty's Government. He said that there was not the slightest foundation for the statement in the "Standard," and that he attributed its appearance to the malice and resentment of the correspondent above mentioned for his (Count Goluchowski's) refusal to receive him.

I thanked his Excellency for the assurance he had given me, and I have this morning written him a note conveying, as instructed by your Lordship's telegram No. 6 of yesterday, the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for his friendly and satisfactory declaration.

The Turkish Government have undoubtedly for some time past exerted all their influence, and spent, it is believed, much money in inspiring the Austro-Hungarian press with their views.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

No. 390.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 250.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 17, 1895, 10 A.M.*

THE name of the Armenian Doctor referred to in my telegram No. 248 of the 16th instant to your Lordship is Reynolds. He would be less likely to excite opposition than a stranger, and, being on the spot, he could begin the work of distribution forthwith.

If a subscription in money is raised, I would suggest to your Lordship that I should be authorized to instruct Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van to inform Dr. Reynolds that he should distribute seed and afford such other relief as may be required, and that he should draw upon the fund for the amount.

I am in communication with the correspondent of the "Times" here, who is telegraphing home respecting the distress, and I believe that the "Times" would be willing to give its co-operation.

Dr. Washburn is going on leave, but if you desire it, I would endeavour to organize a Committee at Constantinople to which Dr. Reynolds might report the measures taken by him.

No. 391.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 251.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 17, 1895, 2·30 P.M.*

I HAVE just received a *note verbale* from the Sublime Porte, containing a further answer to the scheme of reforms. We have never made any such declaration as that attributed to the three Ambassadors in the first sentence. My two colleagues and I meet this afternoon to discuss this reply, and I shall then telegraph again.

(For the substance of the answer, *vide* Sir P. Currie's despatch No. 392 of the 19th June, which contains a copy of the *note verbale*.)

No. 392.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 253.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 17, 1895, 7·50 P.M.*

WITH reference to my immediately preceding telegram, the French and Russian Ambassadors do not consider that they were justified by their instructions in making the question of reforms official, and therefore they were anxious to point out to the

Porte at once that it alone was responsible for the appeal to the Treaty of Berlin and for the official form the communications have now assumed.

There is a great deal of ambiguity in the note, but if construed favourably, its meaning appears to be that, subject to some changes of detail, the Porte accepts our proposals in principle, but eliminates the admission of Dragomans to the Permanent Commission and the submission of the High Commissioner to the approval of the Powers, and substitute for one-third of Christian functionaries a proportion of the whole population.

Careful attention, moreover, should be paid to what may be traps in connection with the LXIIrd and LXIst Articles of the Treaty of Berlin. An intelligible answer will, I hope, be elicited by the communication which our Dragomans have been instructed to make.

No. 393.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 17.)

(No. 254.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 17, 1895, 7·40 P.M.*

THE French Consul at Jeddah believes the attack on the Consuls was instigated from Mecca in revenge for sanitary interference. According to his report, the assassins were not local Arabs, but negroes from a distance.

Could you consult Paris and St. Petersburgh as to the amount of indemnity to be claimed? My colleagues can give no opinion.

No. 394.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 80.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 17, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 249 of yesterday relative to affairs at Jeddah, and the joint action which you propose to take after the departure of the pilgrims.

I approve the course proposed, and I agree with you in doubting the advisability of demanding the dismissal of the Grand Shereef of Mecca. The officer in command of Her Majesty's ship "Pique" believes him to be sincere, and reports that the Consuls at Jeddah are in a state of panic. He states that the situation does not cause him any anxiety, and that the objections raised by the Governor to disarming the Bedouins appear to him to be reasonable.

No. 395.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 18.)

(No. 255.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 18, 1895, 1·10 A.M.*

THIS afternoon, in a long and stormy interview with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Dragomans of the three Embassies unsuccessfully pressed for an intelligible statement as to which Articles of our Reform proposals the answer received from the Porte yesterday accepts, and which Articles it reserves for discussion.

The Minister, who said the Articles were still being studied, was unable to give a distinct reply as to any one point. At last Mr. Block insisted that an immediate answer to our inquiry should be obtained by Turkhan Pasha from the Grand Vizier.

Eventually Mr. Block had an interview alone with his Highness, and pressed upon him the various points. Said Pasha repeated his intention of doing his utmost to satisfy us, and promised that he would give an early reply.

According to report his resignation has been tendered on several occasions.

The Sultan appears to have been encouraged by a telegram received from Rustem Pasha on the 15th, stating that the French Ambassador in London had informed him that instructions had been sent to M. Cambon to endeavour to moderate my action.

I think this is the moment when our Governments should instruct us to insist that the Porte should give us a reply which will define clearly their intentions, and will place the Government in a position to decide what course should be now adopted.

The attitude of the other two Dragomans leaves it clear that a settlement is most anxiously looked for by the Russians and the French, and they will do all that is in their power short of using pressure.

Should active measures be decided on by Her Majesty's Government, Russia and France at present intend to tell the Porte that Turkey will be left alone face to face with England, and that they themselves will stand aside.

No. 396.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 81.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 18, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 250 of yesterday relative to the steps to be taken for the relief of the distressed Armenians, and have communicated on the subject with the Committee of the Armenian Relief Fund.

They would be very glad if your Excellency could form a Committee to receive the funds which they would remit, and to supervise the arrangements for their distribution. The Relief Fund think it very important that the Armenian Patriarch should take part in the Committee, either in person or by deputy, and that it should, if possible, be so composed as to indicate that it is under the patronage of the Russian and French Ambassadors as well as that of your Excellency.

No. 397.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 256.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 19, 1895, 11·15 A.M.

MR. SHIPLEY has sent me the following telegram to-day:—

"I am informed by Mr. Cole that the Mutessarif of Moush has refused him authority to go to Semal until a reply has been obtained from Bitlis. Armenians have already commenced forwarding the oxen and seed collected by them to the Kavoor district. The Mutessarif informs them that until instructions are received from Bitlis he cannot give facilities or countenance these operations, but, in the meanwhile, he does not absolutely prohibit them. It is feared that the cattle may be stolen if the authorities withhold their protection.

"All the Armenians assert that, should relief be distributed from the Turkish fund, they will thankfully and gladly accept it.

"An excellent effect has been produced on Armenians here by the news, which I learn that the Patriarch has telegraphed here, that the Vicar Bishop of Gueudj has been appointed President of the Armenian Relief Committee and Vicar Bishop of Moush."

No. 398.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 19.)

(No. 257.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June* 19, 1895, 2·30 P.M.

THE Russian Ambassador, to whom I have spoken with reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 81 of the 18th instant, says that it would be impossible that the distribution of funds which were not subscribed in Russia should receive the patronage of the Russian Embassy. He also thinks that a political character would be given to the affair by the participation of the three Embassies, and this would certainly hinder the success of the benevolent objects of the promoters. I have sent to ask the Armenian Patriarch if he would be willing to nominate someone to represent his Beatitude on the Relief Committee, and the probability is that he will consent.

I have not been able to see the French Ambassador, but I am convinced that he would share M. de Nelidow's view. I think I should have no difficulty in getting a few gentlemen to act as a business Committee, although many residents are going away for the summer.

The difficulties with the Turkish Government will be less if we make the arrangements with as little ostentation as possible.

No. 399.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 82.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 19, 1895.

HER Majesty's Government entirely approve the third portion of the message to the Porte, reported in your Excellency's telegram No. 252 of the 17th instant, in which the Ambassadors request explanations as to the portions of the scheme of reform which are stated to be accepted in principle and those which require further discussion.

They do not, however, quite understand the two preceding statements, laying stress on the unofficial character of the Ambassador's communications, and stating that they were not based on the Treaty of Berlin. If it is meant that the previous communications with the Porte have been in a less formal shape than the Turkish *note verbale*, there can be no objection to the statement. But the communication of the scheme of reforms which was made with the approval of the three Governments after the scheme had been submitted to them cannot, in our opinion, be looked upon as unofficial.

Moreover, Her Majesty's Government would certainly not disguise the fact, that they base their claim to make representations of this nature to the Porte on the LXIst Article of the Treaty of Berlin.

Although the Porte seems inclined to argue that the rights of the Powers under this Article are limited by the stipulations of Articles VII and IX of the Treaty of Paris as to the independence of Turkey and her freedom from foreign interference, it is clear that the LXIIIrd Article of the Treaty of Berlin only confirms those stipulations in so far as they are not modified by the LXIst Article of this latter Treaty.

No. 400.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 84.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June* 19, 1895.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 255 of yesterday relative to the scheme of Armenian reforms, and have repeated to you the instructions which I have sent on the subject to Her Majesty's Ambassadors at St. Petersburgh and Paris.

You are authorized, if you consider it desirable, to state to the Turkish Government that it may be necessary for Her Majesty's Government to lay before Parliament, at once and *in extenso*, the Reports received from the British Consular officers in Asiatic Turkey, if a satisfactory answer is further deferred.

It must not be concluded from this that, if a satisfactory reply were now received from the Porte, Her Majesty's Government would not in any circumstances publish these Reports, or any portion of them. If, however, parts of them appeared simply as matter of history, after the public sentiment had been satisfied in regard to the adoption of adequate measures of reform, the effect would of course be very different from that which would be produced now, when they would kindle an excitement which it might not be found possible to extinguish by any moderate concession, such as is being urged at the present moment.

No. 401.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 85.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 19, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 256 of to-day relative to the steps which are being taken for the relief of the distressed Armenians of the Sassoon district and the attitude of the Mutessarif of Moush in the absence of definite instructions from Bitlis.

I request you to urge the Turkish Government to cause early instructions to be sent to the Mutessarif authorizing him to assist the operations of the local Relief Committee.

No. 402.

*The Earl of Kimberley to the Marquis of Dufferin.**

(No. 82.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 19, 1895.*

SIR P. CURRIE'S telegrams Nos. 251 and 252 of the 17th and 255 of yesterday, reporting the latest communications between the three Ambassadors and the Turkish Government on the subject of the scheme of Armenian reforms, have been repeated to your Excellency.

I request you to communicate their substance to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and to state to his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government propose that instructions should be sent to the three Ambassadors at Constantinople to call upon the Turkish Government for a reply within forty-eight hours, explaining clearly their intentions with regard to the scheme, in order that the Governments may be in a position to decide what course they shall pursue.

No. 403.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 258.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 20, 1895, 12·45 A.M.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 82 of the 19th June, my colleagues, who were limited by their instructions to making unofficial friendly recommendations, insisted on the two observations made to the Turkish Government by our Dragomans as to the official form of the Porte's note, and as to the Treaty of Berlin.

The two Ambassadors have always held that only a combination of all the Signatory Powers could make official representations, founded on the Treaty of Berlin.

In order that unity of action should be preserved, I agreed to join in the observations provided that they were limited to mere statements of facts, but I stated at the same time that I was not bound by any such restriction.

In appealing to the LXIst Article, the Porte's object is to show that with it alone rests the right to initiate reforms, and to contest our right to demand guarantees, and insist on a complete scheme.

In conversation this view has been repeatedly advanced.

No. 404.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 20.)

(No. 259.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 20, 1895, 7·40 P.M.*

ACHMET RATIB PASHA, a former Vali, has, on the dismissal of the Vali of the Hedjaz, been named Governor-General and Military Commandant.

* Also to Sir F. Lascelles (No. 113).

It has been pointed out to the Porte by the Dragomans of the three Powers that the sudden departure of the Grand Shereef from Jeddah, which was reported by French Consul yesterday, was in opposition to the assurances which we had received that his presence was a guarantee for the security of the town.

As soon as the pilgrims have embarked, the Porte promises to arrest assassins.

No. 405.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 87.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 20, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 254 of the 17th instant relative to the recent attack on Consular officers at Jeddah.

As regards the question of compensation, the amount to be claimed from the Turkish Government depends on the nature of the injuries received by the officials concerned, and on the position in which the late Dr. Razzaek's family are left. Inquiry is being made through the India Office in regard to the latter point.

I should be glad if your Excellency could ascertain what was the exact nature of the wound received by Mr. Richards and whether his health will be affected permanently by it.

When we have received information on these points we shall be in a position to form an estimate of our claim, and will consult the French and Russian Governments as to the amount of the indemnities they propose to demand.

In the case of the attack on Colonel Everett, Her Majesty's Government claimed and obtained a sum of 1,500*l.* from the Porte.

No. 406.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 64.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, June 21, 1895.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 113, Prince Lobanoff is unable, before taking the orders of the Emperor, to reply officially to your Lordship's proposal that a reply should be demanded from the Porte within forty-eight hours; but he does not personally see the use of thus pressing the Porte, and strongly objects to doing so.

His Excellency considers that, in view of the fact that the Grand Vizier has only lately come into office, and that he seems to favour the reforms, more time should be allowed him, especially as, from his past history, he offers better guarantees than any of his predecessors of being able to carry them out satisfactorily.

No. 407.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 88.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 21, 1895.*

WITH reference to your Excellency's telegram No. 257 of the 19th instant, I request you to telegraph as soon as possible the names of the members of the Committee which you are organizing at Constantinople to superintend the distribution of relief among the distressed Armenians. The Armenian Relief Fund inquire whether they can remit money to you.

No. 408.

The Marquis of Dufferin to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 194.)
My Lord, *Paris, June 20, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to report that I have this morning addressed a communication to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, as instructed by your Lordship's telegram No. 82 of yesterday's date, recapitulating the substance of Sir Philip Currie's telegrams, and stating that Her Majesty's Government propose that the three Governments should instruct their Ambassadors to demand a reply within forty-eight hours, giving a clear explanation of the intentions of the Porte, in order that the three Powers may be able to decide upon the course of action to be taken.

I have, &c.
(Signed) DUFFERIN AND AVA.

No. 409.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 22.)

(No. 65.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *St. Petersburgh, June 22, 1895.*

PRINCE LOBANOFF has received the orders of the Emperor, and has telegraphed officially, in the sense of the language reported in my telegram No. 64 of yesterday, to the Russian Ambassador in London.

No. 410.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir F. Lascelles.

(No. 215 A.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 22, 1895.*

THE Russian Ambassador called at this Office to-day, and made the communication, for which your telegram No. 65 of the 22nd instant had prepared me, with regard to the proposal to demand an explicit reply from the Porte within forty-eight hours on the project of Armenian reforms.

M. de Staal said that the Emperor was unable to agree to this proposal as His Majesty did not think there was sufficient ground for making a communication of such gravity, especially in view of the consequences which might result if the reply of the Turkish Government should prove unfavourable.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 411.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 249.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 22, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 369 of the 7th instant, containing an account of the treatment to which an Armenian, named Stepan Simonian, has been subjected by the Turkish officials of Bitlis and Diarbekir.

I approve the steps taken by your Excellency to bring this case under the direct notice of the Sultan.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 412.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 250.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 22, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 380 of the 13th instant, inclosing a list of Armenian ecclesiastics still remaining in prison or exile, which has been furnished by the Patriarchate.

I approve your Excellency's intention of bringing the matter to the notice of the Porte.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 413.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 252.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 22, 1895.*

I HAVE received your despatch No. 376 of the 10th instant relative to the ill-treatment of the Chaldean Christians of Peshkhabour by Mustafa Pasha, Chief of the Miran nomad tribe, and another Kurdish Chief, Agha Isor, of Shirnak.

I approve the action taken by your Excellency with a view to calling the attention of the Porte to the conduct of the Chiefs in question.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 414.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 260.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 23, 1895, 12·10 P.M.*

NO explanation has as yet been received of the Turkish note of the 17th respecting the reform scheme.

With reference to your telegram No. 90 of yesterday, I fear that unless greater pressure than Russia is prepared to use is applied to the Turks, all hope of obtaining anything more than merely nominal reforms must be resigned.

As I have been waiting for your Lordship's instructions respecting the language I should hold, I have refrained from making any communication to the Porte since that reported in my telegram No. 255 of the 18th instant.

I hear privately that the French Ambassador has told the Turks—apparently on the strength of information received from Paris—that Her Majesty's Government intended to send an ultimatum if a clear answer to our proposals was not given by Monday. He has also been doing his best, both in conversation with the Grand Vizier last Tuesday, and since then through his Dragoman both at the Palace and the Porte, to alarm the Turks with warnings of the action which would probably be taken by our fleet in the event of the reforms not being accepted.

In my communications with the Turkish Ministers I have never myself made allusion in any way to the fleet or to any action that would be probable on our part; but our efforts will have been fruitless, and their only result some empty promises which will remain a dead letter, if the Sultan is now allowed to evade giving a direct reply to the demands of the Powers.

No. 415.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 261.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 23, 1895, 8 P.M.*

I HAVE received a telegram from Consul Richards, dated Jeddah, 22nd June, announcing dismissal of Governor-General and Commander-in-chief of the troops, and the Commandant of the Jeddah garrison.

No. 416.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 262.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 23, 1895, 11 A.M.*

YESTERDAY I received the following telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum:—

"Although money is anxiously sought for for military purposes, and the presence of Russian troops on the frontier is a frequent topic of conversation in military circles, no active steps have hitherto been taken to increase the effective of the troops here.

"About the end of last March a revision of the lists of Redifs was made.

"The whole of the 1st and half of the 2nd battalion of the 25th Regiment of infantry, together with a squadron of cavalry, were recently dispatched to the Passin district, where they were distributed along the frontier.

"The object seems to have been to prevent the passage of armed bands of Armenians (*vide* my telegram of the 13th instant).

"The Kurds of the frontier are to co-operate with the troops, and have had cartridges distributed to them."

No. 417.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 23.)

(No. 263.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 23, 1895, 1·30 P.M.*

WITH reference to your telegram about Armenian relief No. 88 of the 21st June, if money is paid to my account at Ottoman Bank, I will transfer it to one or two gentlemen with whom I am in communication, with a view of forming a small working Committee.

I propose, with your sanction, telegraphing to Shipley and Hallward to inform American missionaries or Armenian Local Committee that, in order to purchase seed or other urgent needs of the sufferers, a portion of the money will be placed at their disposal.

No. 418.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 155. Confidential.)
St. Petersburgh, June 14, 1895.

My Lord,

ON the 12th instant I communicated to Prince Lobanoff the substance of your Lordship's telegram No. 106 of the previous day, on the subject of Sir Philip Currie's

conversation with the new Grand Vizier with regard to the guarantees in the proposed scheme of Armenian reforms.

Prince Lobanoff said that he had heard nothing of the further communication promised by the Grand Vizier, but was not sorry that Her Majesty's Government proposed to await the text of His Majesty's reply before replying to the Sultan's proposal.

His Excellency had not yet had time to study this document, which was now with the Emperor, but he was having a careful comparison made of the proposals contained in the scheme elaborated by the Ambassadors and those supported by the Sultan. He could not therefore, as yet, give me a reply as to the views of the Russian Government on the subject.

Prince Lobanoff then repeated to me at some length the language which he had held to me on the 4th instant, and which I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 142 of that day's date. He said that Russia would only be too happy to see an improvement of the Turkish administration, and greater security for the lives and property of the Christian subjects of the Sultan, but she would object to the creation in Asia of a territory where the Armenians should enjoy exceptional privileges. According to the scheme of the Ambassadors, this territory would be of very large extent, embracing nearly the half of Asia Minor. The Armenians in Russia, as he had before told me, were in an excited state, and the authorities had been obliged to take severe measures to prevent them from sending arms and money across the frontier.

He could understand that Her Majesty's Government, on account of the distance between England, or, indeed, any English possessions, and the territory in question, should view the matter with some indifference, but Russia could not consent to the formation of a new Bulgaria on her frontier.

I observed that I had fully reported to your Lordship the language which his Excellency had more than once held to me upon this subject, and that your Lordship was, therefore, in possession of his views.

Prince Lobanoff replied that he did not doubt that I had accurately reported his language, and his object in repeating it to me now was that I might understand the point of view from which he would consider the Sultan's reply.

I have, &c.

(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 419.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 158. Confidential.)
St. Petersburgh, June 17, 1895.

My Lord,

I TOOK an opportunity last week of asking Prince Lobanoff whether he could give me any information with regard to the reception by the Emperor of the Armenian Catholicos, who, I understood, had recently arrived at St. Petersburgh.

Prince Lobanoff replied that the Catholicos was being received that day by the Emperor at Peterhof, and that he was to see his Holiness on the following day. He said that no political importance was to be attached to the reception of the Catholicos. It had always been usual on the accession of a new Emperor of Russia that the Head of the Armenian Church should pay his respects to the new Sovereign, and his Holiness had been given to understand that he should not touch upon political matters in his audience of the Emperor. His Excellency thought that this warning was perhaps not superfluous, as the Catholicos, who was a man of the very highest moral and religious character, was said to be an ardent patriot.

I am informed, on what I consider good authority, that the Catholicos has expressed himself much pleased at his reception by the Emperor. The audience lasted for about twenty minutes, and full honours were paid to his Holiness, who presented an Address to His Majesty calling upon him to protect the Church, and put an end to the desecration of Christian altars, the murder of children, the violation of women, and the threatened extermination of Armenians in Turkey.

This Address was read to the Emperor, who replied that he sympathized with his

co-religionists, and that the Catholicos might be assured that everything would be done that could be done.

I have, &c.
(Signed) FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 420.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 384.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 15, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul-General at Beyrout, reporting disembarkation of Armenians at Swediya and movement of troops.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 420.

Consul-General Drummond Hay to Sir P. Currie.

Sir, *Beyrout, June 5, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to inclose herewith, for your Excellency's information, copy of a despatch from the British Vice-Consul at Lattakia, reporting the sending of a small military force to the seaboard town of Swediya, in the Vilayet of Aleppo, in connection with the rumoured disembarkment of a number of Armenians in that district.

The Governor-General of Beyrout has admitted the accuracy of the foregoing information, and stated to me that several hundred armed Armenians had landed at Swediya, who were suspected of seditious motives.

I am without news regarding the further movements of the troops dispatched from Lattakia, but the Vali of Beyrout informs me that, according to telegrams from Constantinople, the incident has been much exaggerated, and should not be regarded as of any serious importance.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. DRUMMOND HAY.

Inclosure 2 in No. 420.

Vice-Consul Vitali to Consul-General Drummond Hay.

M. le Consul-Général, *Lattaquié, le 31 Mai, 1895.*

J'AI l'honneur de vous informer que hier est arrivé ici le bâtiment de guerre Ottoman "Arcadia," (qui ?) embarqua deux compagnies de troupes régulières du 4e bataillon 38e Régiment d'Infanterie, quatre cavaliers, et quelques caisses de munitions de guerre, et est reparti immédiatement pour une destination non-déclarée.

L'on a cependant vu le navire prendre la direction du nord et l'on dit qu'on va débarquer ces troupes à Swediya, district d'Antioche.

Veuillez, &c.
(Signé) N. VITALI.

No. 421.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 380.)
My Lord, *Constantinople, June 18, 1895.*

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a paper which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch in regard to the famine of 1893, and giving further accounts of the events at Sassoon and the neighbourhood.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 421.

Paper communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

La Famine de 1893.

L'UNE des manifestations de la politique suivie par les autorités Turques dans le but d'affaiblir matériellement et moralement l'élément Arménien dans les endroits où il forme majorité a été la création d'une famine factice en 1893.

Si le Gouvernement ne mettait pas des entraves à la liberté du commerce du blé et des céréales, il n'y aurait pas de disette, ni même cherté de vivres pendant l'hiver de 1893, dans le Vilayet d'Erzeroum et dans les environs. Mais le Gouvernement, désirant faire subir aux Arméniens les horreurs d'une famine, a tout d'abord annoncé la rareté des vivres, pour pouvoir défendre le transport des céréales et pour établir un tarif de prix, en dehors duquel toute transaction a été défendue. Les taxes établies par le Gouvernement étaient bien au-dessous des cours réels des céréales; aussi personne n'a voulu vendre. Les négociants ont caché les stocks qu'ils possédaient et sous l'influence de cette rareté factice les prix ont haussé dans des proportions inouïes; si les céréales se trouvant dans les districts et les vilayets limitrophes, et qui pourrissaient dans les dépôts, étaient transportés sur les marchés, cette cherté n'aurait pu continuer deux jours; mais le Gouvernement savait ce qu'il faisait en interdisant le transport des céréales.

Cette famine a été cause de la ruine et de l'émigration de centaines de familles Arméniennes, tandis que cette émigration même était considérée comme un nouveau crime.

Le Gouvernement, après avoir ainsi créé la famine, a voulu faire étalage de philanthropie en montrant de l'empressement pour venir en aide aux victimes.

On a annoncé en grande pompe l'envoi de Constantinople d'une quantité importante de blé. Mais ces blés sont restés longtemps en chemin et la grande partie en a été perdue pendant le trajet. Aussi c'est une quantité bien minime qui est parvenue jusqu'aux victimes, bien tard, d'ailleurs, pour pouvoir alléger sensiblement leurs souffrances.

Exactions et Outrages dans le Vilayet d'Erzeroum.

Résumé de deux Rapports en date du 6 et 21 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivés d'Erzeroum.*

Nous avons rapporté en son temps l'affaire du village de Gan, à une demi-heure de distance d'Erzeroum, où les gendarmes préposés à la perception des impôts avaient torturé les habitants. Sur les démarches de l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne d'Erzeroum, le Gouvernement Provincial a été obligé de procéder à une enquête; les paysans battus et torturés sont venus raconter les malheurs qu'ils avaient endurés. Plusieurs d'entre eux portaient encore les blessures qu'ils avaient reçues lors des tortures. Le Vali,

au lieu de leur faire justice, a ordonné leur emprisonnement, en leur enjoignant expressément de payer tous leurs impôts; il a, en même temps, chargé le Juge d'Instruction de l'enquête préliminaire, et de la manière dont cette enquête est conduite on arrivera sans nulle doute à prouver l'innocence des auteurs de ces tortures.

Les souffrances des habitants de Gan ne se sont, d'ailleurs, pas terminées. Tout dernièrement encore un jeune Arménien du dit village, âgé de 17 ans, a été enlevé par des gendarmes, qui ont assouvi sur lui leurs passions immondes; aussitôt sauvé des mains de ses ravisseurs, le jeune homme s'est adressé à l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne d'Erzeroum et a raconté, en pleurant, son cas. Mais on n'a pas porté plainte au Gouvernement, certain qu'on était de l'inutilité de toute démarche.

Les Emigrés de Sassoun et leur Sort.

Résumé une lettre en date du 7 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Mouche.*

Ceux des habitants de Sassoun qui avaient pu échapper aux massacres se meurent de faim et de misère, tant sur les montagnes que dans les villes et les villages de la vallée de Mouche. Nous avons entendu que Sa Majesté le Sultan avait offert une somme de 2,000 livres Turques, pour être distribuée aux sinistrés de Sassoun; mais cette somme devant être payée de la caisse du Gouvernement Local, les pauvres sinistrés risquent fort de n'avoir rien, car la pénurie la plus complète règne dans la dite caisse. Depuis les premiers jours du printemps le Gouvernement travaille avec ardeur à faire rentrer les impôts. On s'est contenté jusqu'à présent d'allouer seulement la somme insignifiante de 300 livres Turques au soulagement des pauvres sinistrés. Cela prouve que la distribution de la somme entière est envoyée aux Calendes Grecques, quoique cette somme même soit tout-à-fait insuffisante pour le soulagement des malheurs que les massacres et les pillages ont créés.

Le Gouvernement a invité dernièrement les sinistrés de Sassoun à présenter l'inventaire de leurs pertes; or, tous ceux qui, par leur situation dans le pays ou par leur culture intellectuelle, pouvaient préparer un inventaire approximativement juste, se trouvent en prison. Les autres sont absolument incapables de préparer un inventaire quelconque; mais il existe encore une considération d'ordre différent; les sinistrés de Sassoun craignent d'être obligés de signer une Pétition de remerciements "pour les soins paternels dont ils n'ont jamais cessé de jouir" s'ils acceptent de l'argent. Aussi ils ne font jamais des démarches pour obtenir des secours en argent; ils réclament seulement la restitution des biens qui leur ont été enlevés comme butin de guerre.

Les Arméniens de Mouche et des environs ne peuvent pas même aider leurs frères malheureux par des dons en nature. La charité leur est défendue. Un Arménien qui avait aidé ces malheureux a été questionné par les agents du Gouvernement, qui lui ont demandé le mobile de ses relations avec les émigrés de Sassoun; d'ailleurs les habitations des Arméniens ayant quelques aisances étant constamment surveillées, aider les sinistrés est matériellement impossible.

En automne dernier, les Arméniens avaient acheté une quantité respectable de millet pour être distribuée aux sinistrés; mais la pression dont le Gouvernement faisait usage et la peur qui en résultait les a défendus de procéder à la distribution. Les millets sont restés dans le dépôt du marchand Turc qui les avait vendus. Le prix du millet ayant haussé dernièrement, le Turc ne consente plus à livrer la marchandise et il n'en restitue pas davantage l'argent, prétextant qu'il n'en possède pas. Comme on est persuadé que cette conduite du marchand Turc est suggérée par le Gouvernement, personne ne pense porter plainte.

Les appréhensions les plus graves règnent ici quant à l'avenir. Le peuple est persuadé qu'aussitôt les Délégués Européens partis, les Turcs et les Kurdes commettront toutes espèces de méfaits pour se venger des Arméniens qui ont réussi à prouver les crimes dont les auteurs des massacres s'étaient rendus coupables.

Le Gouvernement fait tout pour obliger les Arméniens de ne nouer aucune relation avec des étrangers. Un Arménien qui recevait la visite de quelques étrangers a été appelé dernièrement au Palais du Gouvernement, où on lui a dit qu'il serait emprisonné si jamais on voyait un étranger entrer chez lui. Les Kurdes ont fait de grands préparatifs, et si jamais une décision contraire à leurs désirs est prise ils se précipiteront sur les

Chrétiens et les massacreront. Des renseignements arrivés de Pharkine prouvent que dans cette localité la situation est encore plus grave qu'à Mouche. Des vexations de toute nature y ont continuellement lieu. Il ne se passe pas de semaine pendant laquelle un assassinat ou un rapt n'aient lieu. Quelques uns des habitants de Talori, qui s'y étaient refugiés, sont morts de faim.

Les Délégués Européens s'étaient rendus dernièrement au couvent dit d'Arakélotz; quelques Arméniens les avaient accompagnés. Hier, ces Arméniens ont été appelé au Palais du Gouvernement, où ils ont subi un interrogatoire officiel.

Le Commisshire de la Police a dit à l'un d'eux: "Pourquoi avez-vous accompagné ces chiens si vous êtes fidèles au Gouvernement!"

Cette parole seule suffit pour caractériser les idées qui règnent dans les sphères officielles.

Extrait d'un Rapport en date du 13 *Mai* (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

Le nombre des sinistrés de Sassoun, refugiés à Erzeroum, augmente de jour en jour.

Ces malheureux montagnards, fuyant les mauvais traitements que les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement leur font subir, même après les massacres, viennent à Erzeroum, espérant trouver ici un sort meilleur. La vue de ces pauvres sinistrés, qui portent tous, même les femmes et les enfants, des blessures d'armes blanches et d'armes à feu, l'extrême dénuement dans lequel ils se trouvent, les soins que réclament leur état déplorable, rendent perplexe toute personne charitable, qui désespère en voyant le manque de moyens matériels pour leur aider. Ces sinistrés seraient sans nulle doute emprisonnés s'ils se retournaient à Mouche; mais subvenir à leurs besoins, même les plus pressants seulement, est impossible avec les moyens qui existent à Erzeroum.

La Situation à Erzeroum.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 13 *Mai* (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé d'Erzeroum.*

L'insécurité complète continue de régner à Erzeroum. Tous les jours de nouveaux crimes sont perpétrés. Hier on a appris ici l'assassinat de trois voyageurs Arméniens, qui ont été immolés comme des moutons dans le défilé de Dévé-Boynou, à une heure de distance de la ville.

Les assassins sont très probablement les soldats des fortifications se trouvant à proximité.

Le Gouvernement a livré le corps de l'un des victimes à l'autorité ecclésiastique Arménienne, en attribuant la mort à une bourrasque de neige qui aurait éclaté pendant le voyage du malheureux, quoiqu'il soit matériellement impossible qu'une bourrasque puisse séparer la tête d'un homme du tronc, et, qu'au surplus, aucune bourrasque de neige n'ait eu lieu dans le pays depuis plus de deux mois.

Le Gouvernement a fait disparaître les cadavres des deux autres victimes.

Les vols et les pillages se succèdent dans le pays. Les voyageurs Arméniens venant de Mouche, de Passen, de Kegli, &c., sont continuellement sujets aux mauvais traitements des Kurdes et des zaptiés. Il y a deux jours, à Passen, trois habitants de Khenous ont été cruellement battus par un zaptié, qui s'est emparé de tout ce qu'ils possédaient.

De pareils faits sont devenus d'une fréquence telle qu'il est impossible d'en citer tous les cas. Mais nous ne pouvons passer sous silence un rapt dont le Chef Kurde, Ouli Khan, habitant le village de Kuteuk-Seuylémez, dans le district de Tekman, s'est rendu coupable. Ce Kurde retient auprès de lui, comme gage, quatre jeunes filles Arméniennes, par ce que leurs pères n'avait pu payer la somme de £T. 2 et une petite quantité de denrées qu'il lui devaient.

Le nommé Garabeth Havoutioumian, habitant du village Arménien de Bache-Tchiflik, composé de vingt maisons environ, qui dépend du district de Kegli, et qui est situé à douze heures de distance d'Erzeroum, s'étant rendu, il y a un an, à Chouchar, pour travailler, y avait été converti de force à l'Islamisme par les Kurdes de l'endroit.

Ce Garabeth, ayant dernièrement trouvé une occasion propice, a pu échapper d'entre les mains des dits Kurdes, et s'est refugié à Erzeroum. Les Kurdes de Chouchar ayant,

avec eux ceux de Bohtan, de Koupek, de Guelan, de Chork, et de Djéban, auxquels ils avaient fait part de la fuite du converti, ont assiégé, le 27 Avril écoulé, le village de Bach-Tchiflik, et ont invité les habitants à leur livrer le fugitif. Les Arméniens ont déclaré qu'ils ne connaissaient pas sa retraite. Les Kurdes ont battu tous ceux qui leur tombaient entre les mains, les femmes comme les hommes, les enfants comme les vieillards, avec des gourdins, des crosses de fusils, &c., et les ont blessés avec leurs armes, leurs éperons, et des jalons.

Cet état a continué à durer jusqu'au Dimanche, le 30 Avril; pendant ces trois jours les habitants, ainsi que leurs bestiaux, n'ont pu quitter le village.

Ils ont été continuellement battus et torturés. Le dernier jour les Kurdes, en poussant la cruauté à ses dernières limites, ont emmené les habitants mâles dans un étable, où ils leur ont donné la question de la manière la plus cruelle. Plus tard les femmes ont été emmenées dans le même étable, où elles ont toutes été outragées et battues très cruellement.

Une grande partie des habitants du village sont tombés malades à la suite de ces tortures.

Le nommé Minass Agopian, qui s'était alité des suites de la bastonnade qu'il avait reçue, est mort le 9 Mai, et son frère Asdvadzadour a perdu l'un de ses yeux.

Les Kurdes sont enfin partis du village, en donnant trois jours de délai aux habitants pour trouver et leur livrer le fugitif. Avant leur départ ils ont menacé les habitants d'un massacre général, semblable à celle de Sassoun, si satisfaction ne leur était donnée.

La terreur règne dans ce village, comme, d'ailleurs, sur tous les points de l'Arménie.

En ce qui concerne les faits regrettables qui se sont passés dans le village de Tchipote (district de Sper), le prêtre (Der-Kapriel) du dit village, qui est venu "incognito" à Erzeroum, rapporte que les Turcs, non contents des cruautés qui ont été commises, menacent les Arméniens d'un massacre général. Le dit prêtre insiste sur la nécessité de s'adresser à des mesures immédiates si l'on ne veut pas que ces menaces se réalisent.

L'Affaire de Segherd.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 13 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Segherd* (*Vilayet de Bitlis*).

Les frères nommés Boghoss, Kharibdjan, et Youssouf, Arméniens de culte Protestant, et les femmes des deux d'entre eux, se trouvaient, depuis un an et demi, dans la prison de notre ville; Youssouf est mort dernièrement des suites des mauvais traitements, et les deux autres, ainsi que les femmes, continuent à y rester dans un état de santé très précaire.

Ces cinq personnes sont accusées de l'assassinat d'un agent de police militaire, dont le corps avait été trouvé dans un puits situé à proximité de leur demeure.

Voici les circonstances de l'enquête qui a été exercée sur cette affaire:—

Aussitôt que l'assassinat a été rapporté au Gouvernement, la police, après avoir arrêté quelques compatriotes de la victime, qui était originaire de Mardine, a fait cerner la maison des prisonniers susmentionnés, qu'elle a arrêtés sans leur faire connaître la cause de cette arrestation.

L'interrogatoire du lendemain a prouvé que Boghoss, Kharibdjan et Youssouf ignoraient absolument l'assassinat; mais leur arrestation, ainsi que celle des Syriens de Mardine, également innocents, ont été maintenues.

L'ancien Mutessarif de Segherd, convaincu de l'innocence de tous ces prisonniers, avait ordonné leur élargissement. Mais le Commissaire de la Police n'en a fait rien; car si les collègues de l'agent tué, dont la culpabilité ne fait doute à personne, étaient convaincus de l'assassinat, la responsabilité du crime jaillirait également sur les officiers qui les commandaient.

Le Général de Division, Commandant des troupes territoriales à Segherd, prenant en considération ce point de vue a fait appeler l'agent de Police Arif Bey, tombé en disgrâce et privé du droit de porter l'épée, par suite d'une dispute qu'il avait eue avec un gendarme, et lui a promis de restituer son grade et son épée s'il trouvait des faux témoins pour faire condamner les Chrétiens emprisonnés.

Le Gouvernement a trouvé le moyen, peu après l'assassinat, de laisser libres les quelques soldats arrêtés; mais les Chrétiens continuent de gémir sous les verroux.

Un barbier Syrien, nommé Hanna, est venu déclarer que le jour du crime il a été appelé, en compagnie de la victime, après d'Ali Riza Bey, sergent breveté, qui se disant malade s'était fait admettre à l'hôpital, et qui exprimait le désir d'être traité par lui (suivant l'usage du pays, où les barbiers sont réputés médecins) et par la victime, à laquelle il attribuait des connaissances médicales; il a vu à l'hôpital quelques soldats entrer dans la chambre du nommé Feyzi Bey, où un conciliabule a eu lieu; Ali Riza Bey et les soldats qui y avaient pris part ont quitté l'hôpital en compagnie de la victime; Hanna, qui y était resté, a entendu des cris au dehors; il en a demandé la cause à Feyzi Bey; mais celui-ci, en le réprimandant, a dit qu'il ne devait pas se mêler à ce qui ne le regardait pas. Un peu plus tard, Hanna étant sorti, a demandé aux soldats où était allé son compagnon; on lui a répondu qu'il ne devait pas s'intéresser à cela, qu'il ne courait aucun danger et que son compagnon avait trouvé sa place. On l'a fait accompagner de soldats jusqu'à sa maison; quelque temps après, quand les soldats (qui ont été plus tard relâchés) ont été arrêtés, Hanna aussi a été conduit en prison.

Malgré ce témoignage très conchant, les Arméniens n'ont pas été mis en liberté.

Le Commissaire de la Police a, plusieurs fois, appelé Hanna auprès de lui et lui a conseillé de faire un faux témoignage, à la suite duquel il serait immédiatement élargi; mais Hanna a préféré de ne pas altérer la vérité et de rester en prison.

Les soldats dont il a été question plus haut se sont retournés dans leur pays, ayant terminé leur service, ainsi que ceux de leurs compagnons dont le témoignage était nécessaire.

On a présenté aux Tribunaux trois faux témoins à la charge des pauvres prisonniers Arméniens; l'un d'eux a déclaré ne rien savoir; les deux autres devaient témoigner qu'ils avaient entendu les femmes des prisonniers proférer des menaces contre la victime et prédire sa fin prochaine; pourtant les erreurs qu'ils ont commises, lors de leur interrogatoire quant à la situation de la maison des victimes et des fenêtres devant lesquelles ils prétendaient avoir vu les femmes des prisonniers, ont parfaitement prouvé qu'ils étaient de faux témoins.

En ce qui concerne le témoignage contre le prisonnier Kharibdjan, il se résume dans les paroles de quelques enfants auxquels le prisonnier aurait conseillé de ne pas jouer auprès du puits. On voulait prouver par là que Kharibdjan avait désiré d'éloigner les enfants, pour qu'ils ne puissent voir le corps de la victime se trouvant dans le puits.

Cette affaire constitue un exemple bien triste de la manière dont la justice est exercée dans les vilayets d'Anatolie.

Insulte à la Religion Chrétienne.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 15 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Husuf-Mansour* (*Vilayet de Mamouret-ul-Aziz*).

Le nommé Agop Alexanian, cordonnier, réclamait dernièrement au nommé Cheikh Agha Bayrakdar-Zadé, l'un des notables du monde Turc de notre ville et Inspecteur de la Municipalité, le paiement d'une créance de 5 piastres.

Le Turc a répondu à cette réclamation par de telles injures contre la religion Chrétienne qu'il est absolument impossible de reproduire ici, et qui, entendues de tout le monde, sont à présent répétées journellement par les enfants Turcs de la ville.

Le dit Agop Alexanian a porté plainte, à la date du 9 du mois courant, au Président de la Municipalité, au sujet de cet outrage.

Malgré des railleries et des refus de toutes sortes, le plaignant insistant à poursuivre l'affaire, celle-ci a été inscrit au rôle du Tribunal Correctionnel, qui en retarde le jugement et qui très probablement l'éternisera.

En attendant, le coupable se promène librement et se fait un gloire d'avoir outragé d'une manière si cruelle la religion des giaours!

Il n'est pas inutile d'ajouter que le dit Cheikh Bayrakdar-Zadé emploie, depuis six mois, le mot Kurde "Kher Sipan" (qui signifie les organes génitaux de l'âne) au lieu de "Kiristiyan" (Chrétien).

Pour donner une idée des insultes proférées à Husuf-Mansour, nous traduisons textuellement les paroles du coupable, Cheikh Agha Bayrakdar-Zadé: "Je jure que le

possède que 17 paras et demi; si je mentais j'accepterais que mes organes genitaux remplacent votre Croix et que mon postérieur s'assimile à votre Eglise!"

La Situation à Ismidt.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 31 Mai (v. s.), 1895, arrivé d'Ismidt.

Le village d'Ada-Pazar, près d'Ismidt, contient deux mille maisons d'Arméniens et autant d'habitations de Turcs et de Grecs.

Ce village est entouré de plusieurs autres dont les habitants sont des Turcs, des Tcherkess, des Abazas, des Géorgiens, des émigrés de la Roumélie, &c.

Cette population hétérogène s'élève au double des habitants Arméniens, Grecs et Turcs d'Ada-Pazar. De plus elle est armée, tandis qu'il est défendu aux Arméniens de porter des armes.

Depuis quelques jours les habitants Musulmans des villages des environs menacent un massacre général des Arméniens, la population Arménienne est effrayée et le danger est tel que nous ne pouvons nous dispenser de le signaler.

Un incident qui a eu lieu Mercredi le 25 du mois courant étant considéré comme une première exécution des menaces proférées, a encore augmenté l'effroi des Chrétiens.

Les "zaptiés" de la Régie de Tabacs sont venus à la date précitée, à douze heures et demie à la Turque, au dit village et sont descendus au marché dit Inous-Aghadj-Dibi, où se trouvent plusieurs débits de spiritueux.

Ces "zaptiés," pendant qu'ils assiégeaient le débit de denrées coloniales tenu par Channès Kalaïnyadzian, sous prétexte de chercher du tabac de contrebande, ont effrayé la population en déchargeant des fusils en l'air. En même temps, l'un des "zaptiés," mettant au chat son zèle, a crié, "Nous allons massacrer les Chrétiens; c'est décidé; nous pouvons le faire à présent!"

Ces menaces ont été répétées par d'autres "zaptiés" encore, en ajoutant que le massacre était ordonné par le Caïmakam.

Les Arméniens ayant agi avec beaucoup de prudence, le danger a été prévenu.

Samedi, le 27 Mai, vers le soir, quand les femmes travaillant dans les vignes retournaient au village à la localité dite Dagh-Dibi, les nommés Ali, Déli-Mehmed, Kodja-Beyek-Hussan, et Rustem, émigrés Tzigans, les menacent avec des poignards, répétant encore qu'ils vont massacrer les Chrétiens. Les femmes se sauvent après avoir éprouvé de grandes peurs.

Dans les autres localités du Sandjak, telles que Baghtchédjik, Ovadjik, Aslan Bey, &c., les habitants se trouvent sous les mêmes menaces.

On dit que Saulettine Pacha, Commandant Militaire d'Ismidt, a ordonné aux Moukhtars Turcs de préparer leurs populations pour une attaque sur Ada-Pazar. Les Musulmans disent ouvertement qu'ils vont partager entre eux les immeubles, meubles, femmes, &c., des Chrétiens, si jamais ils réussissent à les massacrer.

Outrages à Constantinople.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 14 Mai (v. s.), 1895, arrivé de Psamatia (Boulevard de Constantinople).

Quatre jeunes Arméniens retournaient Jeudi passé, vers le coucher du soleil, d'une promenade dans la vallée de Véli-Effendi (aux environs de Yédi-Koulé), quand ils ont été attaqués en chemin par des Turcs, qui les ont effrayés en exhibant des poignards. Trois des jeunes hommes ont pu se sauver en courant; le quatrième nommé Yervanth, âgé de quinze ans, ouvrier orfèvre, fils du nommé Séboul, infirmier à l'hôpital Arménien, est tombé entre les mains des assaillants. L'argent se trouvant dans les poches de ce jeune homme, ainsi que sa montre et sa calotte, ont été enlevés et les Turcs ont assouvi sur lui, jusqu'au matin, leur passion immonde. Le pauvre jeune homme n'a pu échapper de leurs mains qu'à l'aube et est venu dans un état pitoyable rapporter le malheur dont il a été victime à sa famille.

L'attaque avait déjà été rapportée à la police, le soir même; sur de nouvelles démarches, celle-ci a arrêté les coupables, qui ont été envoyés à la prison du Grand-Zaptié.

L'Insécurité et les Exactions à Darendé.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 17 Avril (v. s.), 1895, arrivé de Darendé (Vilayet de Sivas).

Les souffrances de la population Chrétienne à Darendé augmentent de jour en jour, par suite de l'impunition des malfaiteurs et les exactions que les fonctionnaires du Gouvernement commettent, comme obéissant à un ordre.

Les "Kazloudjas" (nom donné aux habitants Turcs d'Akdjé-Dagh) qui avaient tué le 3 Juin dernier (v. s.) en plein jour, le nommé Agop Minoyan, âgé de trente ans, et père de trois enfants, n'ont pas été inquiétés jusqu'à présent.

Il en est de même d'un zaptié et de deux autres malfaiteurs, fils de zaptiés, qui avaient tué en Août dernier le nommé Boghoss, maréchal ferrant, père de six enfants et qui ont été laissés en liberté, après un très court emprisonnement. Dans la nuit 30 Janvier (v. s.), 1895, fête de l'anniversaire de la naissance de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, les nommés Solkal, Moustafa, Katchakdji Dourmouche (repris de justice tous les deux, qui ont été nommés veilleurs de nuit) ont enlevé, avec l'aide de quelques autres malfaiteurs, la demoiselle Kobar, fille de l'Arménien Hovsep Deirmendjian.

Les malfaiteurs se sont introduits de force dans la maison et ont cruellement battu le dit Hovsep et ses gendres qui voulaient s'opposer à l'enlèvement.

Les auteurs de cet enlèvement jouissent également de l'impunité. Les veilleurs de nuit dernièrement nommés, qui sont presque tous des repris de justice, ne perdent d'ailleurs aucune occasion pour vexer la population Chrétienne. Souvent de paisibles passants sont arrêtés à deux heures ou à trois heures à la Turque, de la nuit, et gémissent pendant des journées, quelquefois des semaines entières en prison, d'où ils ne peuvent sortir sans payer des rançons.

Dans la perception des impôts et des dîmes, les exactions se commettent journellement et la misère de la population est arrivée aux dernières limites du possible.

La Situation à Sivas.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 8 Avril (v. s.), 1895, arrivé de Sivas.

1. Le 20 Mars (v. s.) de l'année courante, trois soldats, de la cavalerie "Hamidié" arrivent au village Arménien de Gouldi, où ils descendent pour passer la nuit. Les villageois s'acquittent des devoirs de l'hospitalité Orientale; mais les soldats, non contents des honneurs qu'ils trouvent de la part de la population, commencent à insulter les villageois et, employant les fusils "martini" dont ils étaient armés, font feu sur eux. Les paysans, afin de prévenir des malheurs, se voient alors obligés à désarmer les dits soldats et à remettre leurs armes au Gouvernement. Celui-ci a réussi d'emprisonner l'un des coupables; mais les deux autres se sont enfuis.

2. Le 21 Mars est mort des suites d'une bastonnade qui lui avait administrée le fils du nommé Emmer Hadji Davoud Oglou, l'Arménien Bédross Ohanian, habitant du village Baharend (district de Chehir-Kichla), à neuf heures de distance de Sivas. La cause de cette bastonnade était quelques petits dégâts qu'avaient causés deux moutons appartenant à la victime, en entrant dans le champs de l'agresseur. Plainte a été portée au Gouvernement avec rapport médical à l'appui. Aucun résultat.

3. Le Gouvernement n'a rien fait pour punir les auteurs de l'attaque du village Arménien de Tohodj; au contraire on s'adresse à des ruses pour nier la gravité exceptionnelle du dit incident; la population de Tohodj est toujours alarmée.

No. 422.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 24.*)

(No. 387.)
Constantinople, June 18, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum, reporting an attempt made by the local authorities to force the Armenians to sign a "Mazbata" in praise of the present Administration.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 422.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, June 5, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copy of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting an attempt on the part of the local authorities to induce the Armenians of Van to sign a "Mazbata" declaring their contentment with their present situation under Turkish rule, and deprecating foreign interference of any kind.

I have repeatedly drawn attention to similar attempts to enforce the signature by Armenians of "Mazbatas" of thanksgiving in the Vilayet of Bitlis. In this country these documents are a sure sign of the misgovernment which they are intended to cloak, and they should be read to mean the direct contrary of the sentiments which they express.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 422.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, May 28, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that the authorities here, in accordance with orders received from Constantinople, have been trying to get a "Mazbata" signed by the Armenian population to the following effect:—

1. The Armenians have lived peaceably under the Turkish Government for 500 years in full enjoyment of their civil and religious rights.

2. Some Armenians from this country have gone abroad, and are trying to stir up intrigues, which ought to be suppressed.

3. Foreign newspapers have been publishing statements about this country which the Armenians hereby repudiate and declare to be false.

4. The Armenians are perfectly satisfied with the rule of the Sultan, and do not want the intervention of foreigners in their affairs.

The above was presented for signature to the Armenian Notables, who declared that the representative of the Patriarch must first sign. The latter, on being referred to, said that he was not authorized to sign such documents, and must first obtain permission from the Patriarch; so that none of the Notables of Van have signed.

Signatures have, however, been obtained from some of the villages, though even in them some of the inhabitants who understood the meaning of the document refused to sign.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALLWARD.

No. 423.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 24.*)

(No. 388.)
Constantinople, June 18, 1895.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Erzeroum reporting the arrest of an armed Armenian band near Van, whose leader was furnished with a British passport.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 423.

Consul Graves to Sir P. Currie.

Erzeroum, June 5, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Excellency copies of a despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, reporting the capture of an armed band of fourteen Armenians, one of whom is the bearer of a British Foreign Office passport, near Serai, on the Persian frontier.

I have, &c.
(Signed) R. W. GRAVES.

Inclosure 2 in No. 423.

Vice-Consul Hallward to Consul Graves.

Van, May 29, 1895.

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to report that on the 22nd instant fourteen men were brought under arrest from Serai, a Kaïmakamlik, near the Persian frontier, and imprisoned at Van.

It appears that a few days before they had come on foot from Persia with two or three other men, and arrived at a spot near the village of Chiboukli (*vide* Kiepert's Map), north of Serai. They appear to have intended to pass the night in the open air, but as it was extremely cold they entered the village which is inhabited by Yezeedis, and laid down their arms, which consisted of eleven rifles, made, I believe, in Persia, besides revolvers and knives. The villagers thereupon arrested fourteen of the men, two or three escaping, and sent word to the authorities of Serai. Zaptiehs were sent, who took charge of the men without any difficulty.

Most of the men are ignorant Armenian villagers from this province, three or four are from this town, one is an Armenian from the Caucasus or from Persia, and the other is a young man with a Foreign Office passport, made out in the name of "Harry Williams," British subject going to Russia, and dated the 15th June, 1892. It bears several *visas*, three from the Russian Consulate in London, made in June 1892, January 1893, and the 27th February, 1895, and also the *visa* of the Persian Consul in Erivan, dated the 5th April last, besides several *visas* made in Russia. There is no Turkish *visa*.

The Vali told me he was dressed in native costume, and showed me revolver, rifle, and large supply of cartridges found on him. I was also shown some Armenian newspapers, with caricatures representing the massacre of Sassoon, and other things unfavourable to Turkey, which were said to have been found on him.

I suggested that he should be examined by me before the Vali, with a view to identifying him, and ascertaining, if possible, if he is really the person described in the passport. The Vali, however, would not consent to this before receiving orders from Constantinople, and said that he was sure he was not a British subject. Subsequently I proposed that the prisoner should at any rate write down the name of the paper or Company which he claimed to represent, and also the name of his father, or give some reference in England. To this the Vali consented, and he wrote that he represented the "Central News Telegraphic Agency," and that his father's name was "Willard

Williams," of 22, Ormiston Road, Shepherd's Bush, London. I gathered from the way he wrote that he was not an Englishman; but whether he is a British subject or not I have not yet had the opportunity of ascertaining.

At first he declared that he knew no Armenian or Turk—being examined in French by the Government Interpreter. But the Vali says that since then he has begun to talk Armenian, and that he has confessed to being, not a British subject, but an Armenian from the Caucasus, and a member of the "Henchag" Revolutionary Society. He said that the rest of the party was in his pay.

Considering the undeniably suspicious circumstances under which he was found, I scarcely liked to insist very much on his claim to British nationality; but it seems at any rate desirable that I should have the opportunity of hearing his story from his own lips, and ascertaining, if possible, how he obtained a British passport, unless, indeed, the Vali receives orders to send him to Constantinople. Hitherto he has not received a reply to his request for instructions.

I have communicated the main facts by telegraph to Her Majesty's Embassy.

I have, &c.
(Signed) C. M. HALIWARD.

No. 424.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 24.*)

(No. 300.) *Constantinople, June 19, 1895.*

My Lord,

WITH reference to my telegram No. 230 of the 5th instant, I have the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of despatch which I have received from Her Majesty's Consul at Aleppo respecting the revolutionary movement at Suedia, and the reported landing of arms from Cyprus.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 424.

Consul Barnham to Sir P. Currie.

(Confidential.) *Aleppo, June 6, 1895.*

Sir,

I HAVE the honour to confirm my telegram to your Excellency of the 4th instant, in which I reported that the news of the seizure of a boat containing rifles on the Suedian coast was premature, and that it originated in an official telegram addressed to the Vali by the Kaimakam of Antioch, which he has since contradicted. His real information was limited to the fact that strangers landed last week with arms. Soldiers, both from Aleppo and from Latachia, have been sent to the district; but although the search is being conducted with the greatest energy, no arrests have yet been made. The authorities have information that men and arms came from Cyprus.

In informing the Government of Cyprus of the fact that no actual seizure of a boat with arms had occurred, I have taken the opportunity of informing his Excellency the High Commissioner of the grounds upon which I believe that these revolutionists must have been in communication with the island. I have informed him of the information received by Mr. Sanders as regards the landing of men, rifles, and bombs.

I have to add that the news from Suedia has caused the greatest excitement at the Konak, and the Vali is in constant telegraphic communication with the Porte and the Palace on the subject.

I have, &c.
(Signed) HENRY D. BARNHAM.

No. 425.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 24.*)

(No. 301. Confidential.) *Therapia, June 19, 1895.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copies of three Memoranda by Mr. Block, in regard to the project of Armenian reforms, setting forth the advice given to the Sultan by the French and Russian Embassies, and explaining the position of Germany towards the Porte in the matter.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure 1 in No. 425.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

I AM assured on fairly good authority that the German Emperor has written to the Sultan advising him to accept England's proposals, saying that Germany cannot intervene against England's action, but adding that all Germany could do for Turkey would be to decline to take part in a Conference.

I am unable to confirm the above, but I have learned from the First Dragoman of the German Embassy that when the Chargé d'Affaires visited the new Grand Vizier, the latter asked for Germany's assistance and intervention, and the Chargé d'Affaires replied that Germany had not ceased to take an interest in the welfare of the Ottoman Empire, that they had watched this question very closely, but that, as the Porte had not listened to Germany's advice, Germany could not intervene.

June 14, 1895.

Inclosure 2 in No. 425.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

ON Friday, the 14th instant, the Sultan sent for the First Dragomans of the French and Russian Embassies, and after the First Secretary had, by the Sultan's orders, given a long "historique" of the Armenian question, endeavouring to prove that the Sultan had acted with justice and moderation throughout the question, but that he had not received fair treatment at the hands of the Powers, he said that the communication of the Palace to the three Powers had been considered as a refusal of the proposals made by them, but that this was a mistake, as the Government had not intended to reject the advice of the Powers. The Sultan, said the First Secretary, complained that England required that any further answer should be given within a specified time. He concluded by asking if the Powers went beyond the LXIst Article of the Berlin Treaty in their demands, and if the guarantees required were other than those foreseen by that Article.

On Saturday morning the Dragomans returned to the Palace, and the French Dragoman read a message from M. Cambon, to the following effect:—

"1. Par ménagement pour Sa Majesté nous n'avons pas parlé du Traité de Berlin en lui donnant des conseils amicaux pour l'organisation des vilayets orientaux de l'Asie-Mineure.

"2. Il est dangereux de parler du Traité de Berlin parce que notre intervention prendra alors un caractère officiel.

"3. Il n'y a rien dans les conseils que nous donnons qui excède les termes du Traité de Berlin."

The Russian Dragoman used the same language. The Sultan thanked the Ambassadors for the message, and it is evident that the Porte has partly availed itself of the language in its last reply; but the Russian and French Embassies are surprised and disappointed that the Treaty of Berlin is mentioned in the reply considering they had advised against it, and M. Maximow told Turkhan Pasha in my presence that the Porte had committed a serious mistake, as the matter had now an official character.

June 18, 1895.

Inclosure 3 in No. 425.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

WITH reference to my Memorandum of the 18th instant, I now learn that the Sultan had asked the German Emperor to intervene with the Czar on his behalf in order to induce him to moderate the demands of Great Britain in the Armenian question, and not to insist on any points which would affect the Sultan's sovereign rights. There is little doubt that the Sultan has been encouraged in his last reply by telegrams from St. Petersburgh and Berlin, as well as by the one from Rustem Pasha, which I gave your Excellency yesterday. These telegrams purport to give assurances that the Sultan may be quite easy in his mind respecting any attempt to interfere with the dignity and prestige of the Porte, but more than this they say nothing, and from all I learn France and Russia are working loyally with us at this moment.

M. Rouet, the First Dragoman of the French Embassy, explained to me yesterday why France and Russia could not logically use force together with us to induce the Sultan to give way to our demands, though both he and M. Maximow admit that if they threatened to do so, there would be no use for force, and the Sultan would give way at once. M. Rouet said that throughout the two Powers had posed as the friendly advisers of the Sultan, and had told him that he must give way, or bring about a catastrophe. They had told him they could not prevent England's action; any attempt on their part to do so was no longer possible, and if he did not listen to their advice, they would have to leave him face to face with England alone, with whom he could not hope to cope single handed.

Prince Lobanoff said M. Roubet was not quite in agreement with M. Nélidoff, but the Russian Government had instructed M. Nélidoff to spare no pains to maintain the *entente* between the three Powers unshaken as long as possible.

June 19, 1895.

No. 426.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 24.)

(No. 392.)
My Lord,

Therapia, June 19, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to inclose a copy of a *note verbale* which I have received from the Sublime Porte, and which contains a further answer to the scheme of reforms for the eastern provinces of Asia Minor presented by the Ambassadors of Russia, France, and Great Britain to His Imperial Majesty the Sultan. A similar *note verbale* has been received by M. de Nelidoff and M. Cambon. The substance of this answer has been already telegraphed to your Lordship.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 426.

Note Verbale.

IL ressort des déclarations faites précédemment et en dernier lieu par leurs Excellences MM. les Ambassadeurs d'Angleterre, de France, et de Russie, que ces trois Puissances se basant uniquement sur l'Article LXI du Traité de Berlin, ont fait connaître leur manière de voir au sujet des réformes; qu'en dehors de l'exécution des engagements contenus dans le dit Article, elles ne demandent pas du Gouvernement Impérial un nouveau droit de surveillance et qu'il n'entre dans leur pensée de formuler aucune proposition qui ne serait pas conforme aux lois et règlements établis.

Le Gouvernement Impérial prend acte de ces déclarations et des assurances données par MM. les Ambassadeurs comme quoi leurs Gouvernements n'ont jamais songé à porter, par les réformes en question, la moindre atteinte aux droits souverains de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, et en exprime ses remerciments aux Puissances.

Les dispositions et Articles du Mémorandum et du projet présentés par les trois Ambassadeurs à la date du 11 Mai, 1895, et qui ne seraient pas contraires aux lois et règlements de l'Empire sont, ainsi que cela a déjà été arrêté et confirmé, acceptés

en principe. Sont exceptés toutefois certains points et détails du Mémorandum et du projet qui exigent examen et discussion. Seulement, si les Puissances précitées ont quelque observation justifiée à faire dans les limites de la faculté découlant de l'Article LXI du Traité de Berlin, au sujet de l'exécution des réformes et si, de même qu'elles s'adressent de tous temps au Ministre des Affaires Étrangères par l'entremise de leurs Drogmans, elles font leurs communications au dit Département suivant l'usage établi et en vigueur dans l'Empire, leurs Excellences les Ambassadeurs peuvent être assurés que le cas dont ils auront ainsi donné avis ou communication seront référés par le Ministre des Affaires Étrangères à qui de droit et poursuivis sans aucune négligence. Un fonctionnaire digne de considération à tous égards, sera nommé et envoyé sur les lieux par le Gouvernement Impérial avec mission exclusive et spéciale d'inspecter et surveiller avec le plus grand soin l'exécution des réformes. Lors de l'application de ce projet de réformes les raisons plausibles motivant les modifications qui pourraient être nécessitées par les besoins locaux seront communiquées aux Puissances. Le Gouvernement Impérial déclare à leurs Excellences les Ambassadeurs qu'en vue de sauvegarder les droits souverains de Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan et ceux de son Empire, il est prêt à procéder à l'exécution immédiate des réformes conformément à l'Article LXI du Traité de Berlin et en se basant sur l'Article LXIII de cet Article.

En vue de maintenir d'une façon équitable le principe d'égalité et de justice, le Gouvernement Impérial, lorsqu'il aura à procéder à l'organisation, agira en tenant compte de la proportion du nombre de ses sujets.

Il est bien entendu que le Gouvernement Impérial ne donne aux Puissances d'autre attribution que la faculté qui leur est conférée par le Traité de Berlin.

Sublime Porte, le 17 *Juin*, 1895.

No. 427.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June* 24.)

(No. 394.)
My Lord,

Constantinople, June 20, 1895.

I HAVE the honour to forward to your Lordship herewith copy of a Memorandum which I have received from the Armenian Patriarch respecting the condition of the Sassoun refugees.

I have, &c.
(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 427.

Paper communicated to Sir P. Currie by the Armenian Patriarch.

LA SITUATION DES ÉMIGRÉS DE SASSOUN.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 23 *Mai* (*v. s.*), 1895, *arrivé de Bitlis.*

APRÈS les événements tragiques qui ont livré à la ruine plus de quarante villages, dans le pays de Sassoun et de Talori, la plupart de ceux des habitants qui avaient pu échapper au massacre ont émigré dans les districts et les vilayets environnants, dans le plus grand dénuement et présentant l'aspect de la misère la plus noire.

A Bitlis, les Chambres contiguës aux églises Arméniennes et destinées aux desservants, sont remplies d'une partie de ces émigrés qui, dépourvus d'habits et de chaussures et souffrant souvent de faim, mendient dans les rues.

La population Arménienne a aidé, autant qu'elle pouvait, à ces malheureux; mais la famine, créée depuis plus de deux ans dans le pays, la stagnation de commerce par suite de l'insécurité régnante, et diverses autres causes qu'il est inutile d'énumérer ici, ont déjà réduit cette population à un état qui est bien proche de celui des sinistrés.

Il est impossible de ne pas avoir pitié de ces misérables émigrés qui meurent de faim et de maladie, étant souvent restés dans les rues, exposés aux intempéries et à la chaleur, et ne jouissant d'aucune assistance de la part du Gouvernement.

Une lettre portant la date du 10 Mai et signée par l'Archimandrite Ohannès, Supérieur du Couvent de Sourpe Arakélotz, de Mouch, l'Archimandrite Vartan, Métropolitain *ad interim* de Guindj, le prêtre Der Ghévonth, et le Révérend Agop Mirzayan, pasteur des Arméniens Protestants, a annoncé que soixante-cinq personnes, parmi celles des habitants des villages de Chenik, de Sémal, de Hitenk, et d'Aklpi qui avaient pu échapper au massacre, sont dernièrement morts de la famine.

Cette nouvelle a causé l'émotion la plus vive parmi la population Arménienne, qui, venant en masse devant l'Evêché Arménien, ont demandé la constitution d'un Comité de secours pour les affamés. On a élu, séance tenante, un Comité, composé de six Notables, et la population Arménienne, malgré l'extrême modicité de ses moyens actuels, a souscrit 9,300 piastres en quelques jours. En outre, des habits, chaussures, lainages, &c., ont été offerts par les boutiquiers; mais ces secours sont bien loin de pouvoir améliorer le sort des affamés qui suivront dans le tombeau leurs frères massacrés si des secours ne leur parviennent pas de dehors.

La Situation dans les Villages de Diarbékir.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 9 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Diarbékir.*

Les Chefs Sélim, Moustafa, et Réchid, fils de Dervich-Kehia, ainsi que les brigands Kurdes Kélèche et Ibrahim, fils de Mahmoud Agha, et Abdoé-Sado, Ahmadé-Emine, Rusem, Abdoé-Ahmade, et vingt autres Kurdes de la tribu de Khassakan, dépendant du groupement dit de Richkotan, ont formé une association, dont le but est de piller et de dévaster les villages Arméniens.

Cette Société de brigands a attaqué, le 29 Avril (v. s.) dernier, à 1 heure et demie du soir à la Turque, le village de Gondé-Isso, dépendant du district de Baraval, et, après avoir assassiné le pâtre Khatchadour, qui surveillait le troupeau du village, a enlevé quatre-vingt-dix moutons.

Le nommé Mourad, également pâtre qui accompagnait Khatchadour, a été très grièvement blessé.

Le corps de la victime a été amené à la ville et montré à l'autorité. Mais les coupables n'avaient pas été arrêtés, de plus grands dangers menacent les villages Arméniens des environs de Diarbékir.

La Situation dans les Prisons.

A Diarbékir.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 8 Mai (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé de Diarbékir.*

Les nommés Kévork Chahinian, Hovsep Tôljirian, et Kévork G. Tchakedjian, qui sont emprisonnés à Diarbékir, se plaignent grandement du régime auquel ils sont astreints dans la prison et de la conduite des prisonniers Turcs à leur égard; ces derniers blasphèment la religion Chrétienne, battent et outragent leurs coïtenus Arméniens.

Ils sont soutenus en cela par les gardiens, qui châtient les Arméniens, si jamais ils osent porter plainte contre les prisonniers Turcs.

A cette situation déjà grave, est venue s'ajouter dernièrement la menace d'un massacre général des détenus Chrétiens, de la part des prisonniers Turcs; ceux-ci ont tenu, dans la prison, des conciliabules dans lesquels cette intention a été ouvertement discutée; le 2 Mai (v. s.) les prisonniers Turcs se sont rendus menaçants à la salle où se trouvaient les détenus Chrétiens; mais ceux-ci ont pu calmer leur fureur par une conduite sage et prudente.

Les détenus Chrétiens, rapportant l'incident précité, ajoutent que le danger existe toujours, et sollicitent des mesures immédiates pour que ce danger ne se réalise pas.

A Césarée.

Résumé d'un Rapport en date du 8 Avril (v. s.), 1895, *arrivé, par voie indirecte, de Césarée.*

La situation des détenus Chrétiens se trouvant dans la prison de Césarée, par des prétextes politiques pour la plupart, est des plus déplorables, par suite des mauvais traitements auxquels ils se trouvent sujets contrairement aux lois. Les abus les plus impardonnables ont lieu et ces pauvres gens ne peuvent pas être considérés sauvés des exactions et des injustices des Turcs, même quand ils se trouvent dans une prison.

Voici quelques incidents, qui peuvent servir à se former une idée sur cette situation :—

1. Les prisonniers Turcs exigent souvent la somme d'un médjidié de toute personne qui arrive nouvellement à la prison. Cet impôt d'emprisonnement, qui est nommé "Yortallik-parassi," a été exigé tout dernièrement encore dans la salle dite Asker-Kovouchou des nommés Artine et Kévork, originaires du village d'Evérek.

2. Les prisonniers Turcs exigent diverses sommes de leurs coïtenus Chrétiens, en créant de nouvelles charges contre eux, qu'ils promettent de ne pas faire connaître au Gouvernement si satisfaction pécuniaire leur est donnée. Ainsi tout dernièrement on a caché sous les lits des nommés Garabeth Dadourian et Artine Kechichian, quelques pièces compromettantes que les détenus Turcs ont feint d'avoir trouvé accidentellement et qu'ils ont proposé de détruire si une somme de £T. 5 leur étaient donnée. Les deux Arméniens craignant de nouveaux malheurs pour eux ont donné douze médjidiés contre la destruction de ces pièces, qui étaient écrites de la main d'un autre prisonnier Arménien, que les Turcs avaient pu gagner à leur côté.

Le même procédé a été mis en pratique contre le nommé Khatchadour Muyserian, originaire d'Evérek, qui ne sachant pas écrire, faisait écrire ses lettres à ses coïtenus. Un Turc, que le dit Khatchadour avait prié de lui écrire une lettre adressée à sa famille pour demander quelques secours en vivres et en céréales lui remet une lettre dont le contenu était des plus compromettants. Cette lettre a été saisie par les Turcs quand Khatchadour la faisait lire à un prisonnier Arménien, pour contrôler si l'écrivain avait oublié quelque chose; et la pauvre Khatchadour a été obligé de donner de l'argent pour prévenir les suites de nouvelles accusations.

3. L'outrage à l'honneur des détenus Chrétiens est devenu la chose la plus ordinaire dans la prison. Ainsi douze Turcs ont assouvi pendant une seule nuit leur passion immonde sur le nommé Hadji Agope Kharpertian, qui, comme conséquence de cet outrage, a souffert pendant quatre mois d'une très grave maladie des intestins.

De même, on s'est jeté sur le nommé Garabeth Kenyulian en lui demandant de l'argent et en menaçant de l'outrager. On commençait même à mettre en pratique cette menace; mais Garabeth leur laissant prendre les six médjidiés qu'il possédait, a réussi de s'en sauver.

4. Pour soutirer de l'argent aux Chrétiens, on crée les prétextes les plus futiles; tantôt c'est une prétendue dette, que le Chrétien aurait contractée avant l'entrer à la prison, comme cela a été le cas de l'Arménien Krikor, boucher; tantôt l'accusation inexpiable d'avoir commis un vol au préjudice des Turcs, prétexte qui a été choisi pour battre et dépouiller un autre prisonnier, originaire d'Evérek.

5. Les prisonniers Turcs, dont les chefs sont nommés Khalil Kurde-Oglou et son frère Osman, se sont adjugé la régie de la vente des vivres, &c., dans la prison. Tout ce qui ne peut pas trouver d'acheteur dans la ville est acheté à vil prix par ces gens et puis revendu dans la prison, à un prix double; et si jamais les parents ou amis de prisonniers Arméniens portent quelques vivres les Turcs les saisissent de force et les revendent à un prix très élevé aux personnes auxquelles ces vivres étaient destinés.

6. Les prisonniers Turcs ont rédigé dernièrement une Pétition pour être présentée au Gouvernement, par laquelle ils sollicitent le transfert des détenus au local dit Toprak-Kovouché; ils ont exigé des Arméniens de signer cette Pétition. Le dit local étant très malsain, les Arméniens ont refusé de donner leur signature. Mais les Turcs font tout le possible pour obtenir ce transfert. Leur but en cela est que l'entrée de la partie du dit local destinée aux Chrétiens donnant sur la partie

qui sera habitée par les Turcs, les détenus Chrétiens seront obligés de passer de la salle des Turcs pour aller aux lieux d'aisances ou au jardin. Cela augmentera le contact des Turcs avec les Chrétiens, qui auront ainsi de nouveaux vexations et outrages à subir. Aussi les détenus Chrétiens, Arméniens et Grecs, de la prison de Césarée, implorent-ils pour qu'il ne soit pas donné suite à la sollicitation des Turcs.

No. 428.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 395.) *Constantinople, June 20, 1895.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a Memorandum by Mr. Block, reporting on the antecedents of Saïd Pasha, the new Grand Vizier, and of Turkhan Pasha, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

Inclosure in No. 428.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

(Confidential.)

SAID PASHA, the new Grand Vizier, was born at Erzeroum, his father being a native of Angora. He began life as Turkish editor of a Turkish newspaper, called the "Jeridé Hawadiss," belonging to an Englishman named Churchill. He entered the Porte as a clerk, and became successively Head of the Correspondence Department of the Ministry of the Interior and of the Grand Vizierate. He then occupied the post of First Secretary to the Sultan and, later, became Minister of the Interior. His relations with Safvet Pasha, then Grand Vizier, were not good, and he was consequently appointed Vali of Broussa, where he remained seven months, returning to fill the post of Grand Vizier. He went out of office for twenty-four hours, when Ahmed Vefik Pasha was appointed Grand Vizier, and again for eighty days during Abdul Rahman Pasha's Grand Vizierate.

He is supposed to be the strongest statesman that Turkey possesses. During the last ten years he has been out of office and living in retirement, almost a prisoner in his house. He has spent his time in studying the history of Europe in this country, and it is said that he is the only man who understands the danger of the situation and is of sufficient ability and independence to infuse new life into the Administration. He is, above all things, a patriot, and there seems little doubt that before taking office he imposed conditions upon the Sultan. He told him himself that he did not wish to take office, that he found the difficulties of his position overwhelming in face of the opposition at the Palace to any reforms, and the fear is that he may resign if he does not get his way.

Yesterday, his fifth day of office, he told me that he was overworked and could not continue much longer in this way. One version of his nomination is that the Sultan sent for him, knowing that he was the only man he could rely on during the present crisis. A second is that the Sultan relies on him to oppose the demands of the three Powers. The third is that the Sultan fears and hates him, will render his position impossible and thus ruin him in the eyes of Europe and of the Turks.

I am inclined to believe in the first version, though I think his independence of character and the opposition of the Sultan may lead him to leave office. With regard to the second version, it is true that in 1885 Saïd Pasha resigned office because the Sultan would not agree to opposing the Powers, and declined to accept his advice to march troops into Eastern Roumelia; but in 1882 he advised the Sultan to give way to England on the Eastern question, and on the present occasion, though he is not the man to yield to foreign pressure, yet he understands that the country is sorely in need of reforms, and that the Powers are right in insisting upon them. He justifies his conduct in 1885 by stating that all he demanded was the strict application of the Treaty of Berlin, that Bulgaria was a vassal State in revolt against the Suzerain Power, and that, in spite of Europe's opposition, Turkey had a right to move her troops.

It is only just, however, to add that the late Foreign Minister, Saïd Pasha, has stated that the present Grand Vizier is not sincere towards the Powers, and will only suggest the strict observance of Article LXI of the Treaty of Berlin. But the late Foreign Minister is doubtless smarting upon his sudden dismissal from office after ten years' tenure and is not likely to say anything in Saïd Pasha's favour.

The third version is, however, possible, although it would seem incredible that the Sultan's love of a Machiavellian policy should blind him to the danger of playing with fire.

The following is the text of the Imperial Prescript appointing Saïd Pasha:—

"My illustrious Vizier,

"In consequence of the removal of Jewad Pasha, we have conferred upon you the post of Grand Vizier on account of the loyalty you have shown since the beginning of our reign and your honesty and capacity.

"We have confirmed in office Mohammed Genad-ul-din Effendi, present Sheikh-ul-Islam, in virtue of his excellent services. Our most sincere desire being to secure the contentment and prosperity of all classes of our subjects, we desire and expect from your ability and uprightness the fulfilment of this desire and the execution of the reforms of which our Empire is in need. May the Almighty God assist you to that end."

Turkhan Pasha is an Albanian, educated at Yanina. He became a Translator at the Porte, was appointed Second Secretary at St. Petersburgh in 1874, and was then successively First Secretary at Athens, Berlin, and Rome.

He then fell into disgrace and was exiled as Mutessarif of Tekké; he regained the favour of the Sultan, was named Minister at Madrid, and, in 1891, was named Delegate at Paris to the Sanitary Congress. He acted as Ambassador from Essad Pasha's departure until Zia Bey's nomination; was recalled here and appointed Acting Vali of Crete, where he remained till March last when he was succeeded by Karathéodory Pasha. He was named President of the Reform Commission, which office he still holds. He is essentially "un homme de Salon," without much experience of affairs. It is said that his appointment is only temporary and that he will be succeeded by Karathéodory.

Therapia, July 14, 1895.

No. 429.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 396.) *Therapia, June 20, 1895.*

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith a copy of the instructions given to the Dragomans by the three Ambassadors respecting the representations to be made to the Sublime Porte with reference to the further reply given by the Turkish Government to the scheme of reforms, together with a Memorandum by Mr. Block reporting the communications which passed on the subject with the Grand Vizier and the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.

(Signed) PHILIP CURRIE.

P.S.—I also inclose copy of a further Memorandum by Mr. Block, reporting the views attributed to the Grand Vizier with regard to the second reply of the Turkish Government to the scheme of the three Ambassadors.

P. C.

Inclosure 1 in No. 429.

Instructions.

L'AMBASSADEUR m'a chargé de vous dire qu'il transmettrait à son Gouvernement votre note de ce jour, et qu'il attendrait des instructions pour y répondre.

Dès à présent voici les observations que cette note lui suggère:—

1. Jusqu'à présent les communications entre Sa Majesté Impériale et les Ambassadeurs relatives à la question visée par la note étaient officieuses. En adressant une

note verbale aux Ambassadeurs, la Porte semble vouloir donner à la question un caractère plus officiel.

2. Les Ambassadeurs n'ont pas basé leur projet sur le Traité de Berlin, ils n'ont fait aucune déclaration à ce sujet et c'est la Porte elle-même qui vise le Traité dans sa note.

3. La note parle d'Articles du projet des Ambassadeurs qui seraient acceptés en principe et de points et détails pouvant donner lieu à discussion.

Pour éclairer son Gouvernement sur les intentions de la Porte, l'Ambassadeur demande quels sont les Articles acceptés en principe, et quels sont les points et détails pouvant donner lieu à discussion.

La réponse à ces questions implique la solution des autres points visés par la note.

Inclosure 2 in No. 429.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

IN accordance with instructions I, with my Russian and French colleagues, made the inclosed communication to the Foreign Minister. His Excellency's language was most vague and unsatisfactory. He said with regard to the first point that, in his personal opinion, the Porte had not intended to accentuate the official character of the correspondence by sending a *note verbale*; in answer to the second point, personally, he thought it better to mention the Berlin Treaty; and with regard to the third he said, "Je ne suis pas à même de vous répondre car nous sommes en train d'étudier les points et détails dont parle la note verbale."

After a protracted discussion, in which my colleagues joined and which left upon us the impression that Turkhan Pasha neither understood the gravity of the matter, nor had any authority to speak about it, I insisted that this ambignity must be cleared up at once, and that he should get an answer from the Grand Vizier or the Palace, if he could not give one himself.

Finally, he went to the Grand Vizier and after an hour's conference with his Highness he told us that the matter would be attended to by his Highness, who would give us a reply later.

I then saw the Grand Vizier and I used every argument to convince him that we must have a clear understanding as to what the Porte accepted and what was reserved for discussion. I adopted the most friendly tone, but I said that the situation did not admit of further delay, and that your Excellency relied on him to use every effort to settle the question in a manner satisfactory to his country and to the Powers. His Highness replied that you might count upon him to use all his endeavours to obtain a favourable solution of the question; he would examine our communication and give us a reply on the third point. With regard to the other two points, he was personally of opinion that it was far preferable to treat the matter officially with the Porte, and that there was no objection to the mention of the Treaty of Berlin.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

Inclosure 3 in No. 429.

Memorandum by Mr. Block.

THE last reply of the Porte's is not Said Pasha's doing. From all accounts he proposed that the project of reforms and Memorandum should be accepted with the condition that a delay should be granted by the Powers for consideration of the most practical means for putting them into execution; his Highness proposed also certain reforms for the other provinces of the Empire. This nearly caused his downfall.

The Sultan was extremely vexed and sent for Kiamil Pasha, who loyally supported Said's view. Finally, the answer was drafted at the Palace. Said Pasha yesterday expressed to the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs his dissatisfaction at the reply, although to me he said, from his personal point of view he thought that it was well to have the matter placed on a more official footing and more desirable that we should treat with the Porte than the Palace, and that he considered we had made a step forward.

Said Pasha is in a very difficult and critical position. He obtained, on taking office, a promise from the Sultan that the Ministers would be changed, and those whom he recommended appointed in their place. In spite of this promise the Sultan immediately appointed Turkhan Pasha as Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom the Grand Vizier has described as "an idiot and a nonentity," and in the night following the Grand Vizier's appointment an Iradé was issued confirming all the Ministers in office. The Sultan had proposed to Said Pasha as his Foreign Minister Saleh Munir Pasha, as Minister of the Interior, Ahmet Refik Bey, the present Under-Secretary of that Department, but the Grand Vizier formally objected to them.

His Highness intimated to the Sultan that he desired to have Hassan Fehmi Pasha, Vali of Smyrna, as Minister of Justice, Ismail Kemal Bey as Minister of Public Instruction, Faïk Pasha, Chief of the Staff at the Admiralty, as Minister of Marine, and to send for Zihne, Munir, and Cadri Pashas, Valis respectively of Salonica, Brousa, and Trebizond, in order to give them posts in the Cabinet. This would have been an exceedingly good Ministry, but the Sultan decided otherwise. The Grand Vizier also demanded the dismissal of Redran Pasha, the Prefect of Stamboul, but the Sultan declined to agree to it.

The Sultan sent Loutfi, his valet and confidential servant, who is the most influential adviser at present of His Imperial Majesty, to make some communication to the Grand Vizier, but his Highness declined to receive him, saying he (Loutfi) had no right to meddle in affairs of State.

Naturally the Sultan is much annoyed. The Sultan is probably perfectly well aware that he will have to yield to our demands in the end. There is little doubt that as long as his personal comfort and security is assured he cares very little what happens to his dominions or his subjects. But he fears that if he yields to European pressure, and if he grants privileges to Christians, and lastly, if he submits to the influence of the Palace being reduced, he incurs personal danger from the military, the Ulema, and others of his immediate surrounding. As long as Djevad was Grand Vizier he was considered by the people as the creature and mere tool of the Sultan, and had the Sultan been forced to give way on this question with Djevad Pasha in office he feared that the people would throw the whole responsibility upon him. He therefore looked for some means of escaping from this position, and he came to the conclusion that he must put at the head of the Ministry a strong man, enjoying a certain popularity as a patriot and and intelligent and courageous statesman, and in whom the Mussulman world had confidence.

Such a man he found in Said Pasha, though he feared him, even disliked him, and had to submit to his conditions, yet he calculated that if Turkey had to yield Said would be looked upon as responsible, and the country would say that if Said had to give way there was no help for it; in fact, he screens himself behind Said's influence and popularity, and the confidence he enjoys with the general public. That confidence is daily increasing, but the Palace clique for the present has got the best of it, and Said's position is most precarious. If he fails, however, the Sultan will lose a good deal of esteem, and it is the Sultan who eventually will suffer. The mention of the Berlin Treaty in the last note is also ascribed to the Sultan's fears, as he can now say he yielded in accordance with an Act signed by him in a former moment of defeat, and not to England's pressure.

Said has proposed considerable reductions in his own salary (from £ T. 1,000 a-month to £ T. 300), and the cessation of the foreign press subvention.

(Signed) ADAM BLOCK.

June 19, 1895.

No. 430.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 21.)

(No. 265.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 21, 1895, 7·30 P.M.*

TO-DAY I have learnt from the Russian and French Ambassadors that their Governments have instructed them to press for an early answer from the Porte in order that they may be in a position to consider the situation.

Communications respecting the reforms have been passing between the Palace and the Porte and the two Embassies, and there are grounds for hoping that in the

next twenty-four hours a communication of a more satisfactory nature may be made to us.

The Palace have privately suggested that Raif Pasha should be made High Commissioner. He is now Director-General of Customs, and his appointment would not be a bad one.

No. 431.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 24.)

(No. 266.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 24, 1895, 7·50 P.M.*

UNTIL we have seen whether authorities take steps for the capture and punishment of the offenders which were promised immediately after departure of pilgrims, I hardly think that it would be expedient to reduce our naval force at Jeddah, as suggested in your Lordship's telegram No. 89 of the 22nd June.

It seems undesirable that we should be in less force than the French, who are, I understand, sending a cruiser to reinforce their gunboat.

Our Consul has sent very few reports, but the conduct of the authorities appears from telegrams received from the French Consul to be very unsatisfactory.

I have instructed Mr. Richards by telegraph to send further information.

No. 432.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 91.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 24, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 260 of yesterday, pointing out the necessity of exerting further pressure with a view to obtaining an explanation from the Turkish Government in regard to the scheme of Armenian reforms.

The Ministry having tendered their resignation, which has been accepted by Her Majesty, I must leave it to my successor to decide what course is to be followed on this question.

No. 433.

Armenian Relief Fund to Foreign Office.—(Received June 25.)

3, Essex Court, Temple, London, June 24, 1895.

Sir,

THE Committee of the Armenian Relief Fund would be much obliged if Lord Kimberley would transmit, by telegraph if possible, the inclosed sum of 1,000*l.* to Sir Philip Currie for the relief of the Armenian refugees in Sassoon, who are in need of assistance.

The Committee hope to be able to make a further remittance during the present week.

I am, &c.
(Signed) EDWARD ATKIN, *Treasurer.*

No. 434.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 264.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 24, 1895, 7·30 P.M.*

EFFORTS have been made by the Porte to induce us to send instructions to our Delegates on the Commission at Moush that they should sign or otherwise adhere to the Commissioners' Report.

We have refused to accede to the Porte's request. Meanwhile, the Delegates have

asked for instructions, as the Commission have been pressing them to make observations on the first portion of their Report. We have told them that, until they receive the Report in a complete and definitive form they are to defer making any observations on it. They are then to communicate any observations they may have to offer to the Commissioners, and at the same time to transmit them to the Ambassadors, together with the Report.

Any attempt to make the Delegates responsible for any part of the Report by incorporating in it the Delegates' observations will thus be prevented.

No. 435.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 25.)

(No. 267.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 25, 1895, 10·45 A.M.*

YESTERDAY I received the following telegram from Her Majesty's Consul at Jeddah:—

"I have been in consultation with the Captain of Her Majesty's ship "Pique," and am still of opinion that the vessel is required here. The new Governor-General will probably be here in a week, and although Captain of "Pique" is anxious to proceed, he has promised to remain until then. I consider that things are in a somewhat critical condition here, particularly in view of the fact that the Grand Shereef is a notorious partisan of Ahmet Ratib Pasha, and also because there has been an affray at Mecca between the Shereef's troops and Bedouins, and raiding by the latter in the neighbourhood of Jeddah."

No. 436.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 93.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 25, 1895.*

I HAVE communicated to the Armenian Relief Fund the substance of your Excellency's telegram No. 263 of the 23rd instant.

They leave it to you to allot the money forwarded to you in the way you think best. You can, therefore, telegraph as proposed.

No. 437.

Foreign Office to Armenian Relief Fund.

Foreign Office, June 25, 1895.

Sir,

I AM directed by the Earl of Kimberley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, inclosing cheques to the value of 1,000*l.* to be remitted to Sir P. Currie for the relief of Armenian refugees in Sassoon who are in need of assistance.

The money has been paid to Sir P. Currie's credit with Messrs. Glyn, Mills, and Co., and he has been advised by telegraph.

Lord Kimberley would be glad to be able as soon as possible to return an answer to Sir P. Currie's question (about which I wrote to Mr. Stevenson yesterday), whether he might authorize the expenditure of a portion of this money for immediate distribution of relief by the Armenian Committee, or the American missionaries at Van and Bitlis.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 438.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 268.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 26, 1895, 3·50 P.M.*

WITH reference to my telegram No. 265 of the 24th instant, Turkhan Pasha this morning summoned the three Dragomans to the Porte, and informed them that he expected to receive during the afternoon an Iradé from the Sultan appointing an Inspector of Reforms—not a High Commissioner. He did not know who it would be, and his name would not be submitted to the approval of the Powers.

His Excellency also delivered to them the following message:—

"A Commission is to meet at once to examine and discuss which are the Articles of the Memorandum and Project of the Ambassadors that are accepted in principle, and which are the points and details reserved for discussion. The Commission will consist of the Ministers of the Interior, of Justice, Public Instruction, and Foreign Affairs, and the Under-Secretary of the Grand Vizier."

We can hardly expect any satisfactory results from a Commission so composed.

No. 439.

Mr. Howard to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 26.)

(No. 39.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Paris, June 26, 1895.*

DURING the interview which I had with M. Hanotaux to-day no reference was made to foreign politics till, as I was leaving, he said that, with regard to Armenian reforms, he had just informed Turkish Ambassador that the Porte must not think that a separate policy would be adopted by France. She was, on the contrary, acting in entire accord with England and Russia, and it would be best to bring the matter to a speedy conclusion.

No. 440.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 94.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Foreign Office, June 26, 1895.*

JEDDAH. I have informed the Admiralty that it is not desirable that the "Pique" should leave at present. In the meantime, the Captain suggests waiting for a week, or till the new Vali arrives.

No. 441.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 269.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 27, 1895, 11·10 A.M.*

ARMENIAN Relief Fund.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 93 of the 25th instant.

I have obtained the consent of three leading British merchants, Messrs. Whittall, Gatheral, and Thomson to act as a Committee to surpervise the distribution, and shall transfer to them the 1,000*l.* forwarded to me.

As to the question of local distribution, I am in communication with the Consuls at Van and Moush.

No. 442.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 27.)

(No. 270.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 27, 1895.*

MR. GRAVES telegraphs that news from Russia indicates beginning of a considerable concentration of troops at Suikamish.

According to Russian Consul-General at Erzeroum, there are three divisions there already, but this, in Mr. Graves' opinion, is at least premature.

It is said that military authorities at Erzeroum telegraphed to Erzinghan this week that another battalion could not be sent to the frontier for want of money.

They are working hard to complete Palamdaken forts.

No. 443.

The Earl of Kimberley to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 256.)
Sir, *Foreign Office, June 27, 1895.*

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 264 of the 24th instant relative to the desire of the Porte that the foreign Delegates at Moush should adhere to the Report of the Bitlis Commission.

I approve the instructions which you and your French and Russian colleagues sent to the foreign Delegates with a view to prevent them from becoming responsible for any part of the Report.

I am, &c.
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

No. 444.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 271.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 28, 1895, 11·45 A.M.*

THE Dragomans were yesterday informed by Turkhan Pasha that Marshal Shakir Pasha had been appointed by the Sultan as Inspector of certain localities in the provinces of Asiatic Turkey.

They inquired what was to be the nature of his functions, but his Excellency could give them no further information.

No. 445.

Sir P. Currie to the Earl of Kimberley.—(Received June 28.)

(No. 272.)
(Telegraphic.) P. *Constantinople, June 28, 1895, 2·45 P.M.*

WITH reference to your Lordship's telegram No. 85 of the 20th June, I have to inform your Lordship that the Porte maintains that the distribution of relief should be done by the Turkish authorities, and therefore refuse to allow Mr. Cole to undertake it.

No. 446.

Foreign Office to Home Office.

Foreign Office, June 28, 1895.

Sir,

ON the 25th ultimo a telegram was received from Mr. Hallward, Her Majesty's Vice-Consul at Van, stating that a band of fourteen armed men had been captured by Turkish troops near the Persian frontier and brought to Van. Thirteen were stated to be Armenians, and the remaining one, who described himself as the leader, was

found to be in possession of a Foreign Office passport dated the 15th June, 1892, and made out for "Harry Williams, British subject, going to Russia."

It was ascertained that such a passport was actually issued from this Office to a Mr. H. Williams on the date mentioned, in exchange for one given to him in 1886 on the recommendation of a Dr. Burns Gibson, of 5, Greenhill Park, Harlesden, N.W.

Mr. Hallward subsequently reported that the bearer of the passport said that he was a correspondent of the Central News Telegraphic Agency, and gave his father's name as Willard Williams, of 22, Ormiston Road, Shepherd's Bush, London, but finally admitted that he was an Armenian.

In reply to an inquiry addressed to the Central News Agency, they stated that Williams was not their correspondent.

A letter was also addressed to Mr. Willard Williams, at the address given, on the 29th ultimo. No reply has been received, and the letter has not been returned through the Dead Letter Office.

I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to suggest that Mr. Secretary Asquith should cause inquiry to be made with a view to ascertain who Mr. Willard Williams is, whether he has a son named Harry, and, if so, what is known about the son's present occupation and whereabouts.

I am, &c.
(Signed) T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 447.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

(No. 99.) *Foreign Office, June 29, 1895.*
(Telegraphic.) P.

I HAVE received your Excellency's telegram No. 272 of yesterday, and should be glad to know whether there is any European Agency available for the distribution of relief to the distressed Armenians which would be more acceptable to the Porte than the employment of Mr. Cole's services. If the Porte will not consent to any European being employed, the practical result will be that the distribution of relief will be arrested, and this would be a measure of grievous inhumanity which Her Majesty's Government feel confident the Sultan would not sanction.

No. 448.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 30.*)

(No. 205. Confidential.) *Vienna, June 28, 1895.*
My Lord,

YOUR Lordship's attention has already been drawn to the attacks made upon the attitude assumed by Her Majesty's Government towards the Sultan in the "Pester Lloyd," and, in a somewhat modified form, in the "Neue Freie Presse," the two most important newspapers published in this Empire.

I think it therefore of interest to transmit herewith a summary, taken from the "Correspondance Politique" of last night, of an article in yesterday's "Fremdenblatt" (the organ of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), dealing with the Armenian question, which contains no such offensive language, but treats of the action of the Powers in sensible and moderate terms. The point on which I lay the greatest stress is the reference to the possibility of England being compelled to take by herself energetic measures to induce the Porte to comply with the exigencies of the three Powers.

I think it right to state to your Lordship that, although neither from Count Goluchowski himself nor from either of his two principal subordinates at the Ballplatz have I heard any one word implying disapproval of the insistance of Her Majesty's Government with the Porte and with the Sultan, it has come to my knowledge, by more than one channel of private information, that the articles in the two newspapers mentioned at the beginning of this despatch enunciate views not altogether unacceptable at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and I have been most positively assured by a gentleman who ought to know, and who is very trustworthy, that, as regards the "Pester Lloyd," the objectionable articles actually emanated from the inspiration of the Press Bureau, which is, as I stated in a previous despatch, under the direct control of the Foreign Office.

I have very little doubt that a considerable amount of Turkish money has been spent upon the Austrian and Hungarian press, but it is to be regretted that the purchased utterances of these journals should have been privily sanctioned by an official Viennese Bureau; and, in view of the article now published by the accredited organ of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, I am inclined to hope that my language to him on the tone of the above-mentioned venal press, and certain other representations which I know have been made to the Hungarian Ministers, have not been without effect.

I have, &c.
(Signed) EDMUND MONSON.

Inclosure in No. 448.

Extract from the "Correspondance Politique" of June 28, 1895.

LA plupart des journaux de ce matin s'occupent des événements en Turquie et expriment l'espoir qu'on réussira à aplanir heureusement les difficultés qui ont surgi en Orient.

Le "Fremdenblatt," récapitulant les événements d'Arménie, fait ressortir que la circonstance que l'Angleterre, la France, et la Russie ont entrepris une action commune dans la question Arménienne devait prouver à la Sublime Porte que les exigences de ces Puissances n'impliquaient pas une tendance politique qui lui fût hostile, mais que cette action avait exclusivement pour but de mettre un terme à des abus intolérables. L'Autriche-Hongrie n'aurait sans doute pas participé à cette action, mais il serait notoire qu'elle a usé de son influence pour déterminer la Sublime Porte à accepter les dites exigences. Il serait, d'ailleurs, de l'intérêt même de la Turquie que cette action aboutit promptement, sans que l'une ou l'autre des Puissances, l'Angleterre par exemple, fût forcée de prendre une attitude plus énergique, ce qui ne pourrait que nuire à l'autorité de la Sublime Porte. "Il est donc permis d'espérer," ajoute l'organe du Ballplatz, "que cette considération amènera le Sultan, dont on connaît la sagesse et le tact à se familiariser avec les exigences posées à la Porte. Pour ce qui est des événements de Macédoine il ne faudrait pas y attacher une importance particulière. Le Gouvernement Bulgare ferait certainement son possible pour empêcher des combattants de passer en Macédoine, et la Sublime Porte aurait sans doute elle-même soin d'introduire des améliorations dans cette province. "L'Europe tout entière," dit le "Fremdenblatt" en terminant, "veut la paix. Il est certain que la Turquie aura, elle aussi, à cœur de réaliser ce qui est nécessaire au bien-être d'une partie de sa population, d'autant plus qu'elle ne fera ainsi qu'accroître ses forces économiques et publiques et consolider les fondements de l'Empire."

No. 449.

Sir E. Monson to the Earl of Kimberley.—(*Received June 30.*)

(No. 208. Confidential.) *Vienna, June 28, 1895.*
My Lord,

BARON CALICE, who is on a short leave of absence from Constantinople, was so good as to give me, the day before yesterday, a very detailed account of his recent interviews with the Sultan, and with the new Grand-Vizier.

His Excellency said that he had recounted to Sir Philip Currie all the details of his conversation with His Imperial Majesty, but that he had not been able to see his English colleague after his visit to Saïd Pasha. Although, therefore, it was "past history," it might be as well that I should know that he had spoken very plainly to his Highness.

Baron Calice seems to have pointed out clearly to Saïd Pasha that as the reforms proposed were notoriously the outcome of negotiation between the three Ambassadors, whose views had not been on every point identic, they must be taken to be the absolute minimum of what would be accepted. He impressed upon the Grand Vizier that the guarantees against which so much protestation had been made were really to the advantage of the Turkish Government, lending them that strength for the execution of measures the principles of which are not in contradiction with the spirit

of former administrative decrees and concessions, which the experience of past years proves that Turkey itself does not possess.

Baron Calice showed further that delay must inevitably produce increased difficulties, provoked by the raising of other questions, such as the Macedonian and the Cretan, which Turkey would certainly have to confront in addition to the Armenian, did she continue to dally with the latter.

Finally, he told Saïd Pasha that it would be a great mistake to suppose that it was worth while counting upon divergences between England on the one side and France and Russia on the other. The two latter might certainly decline to use coercion, but they would as certainly stand aside and allow England a free hand in employing it.

Saïd Pasha appears to have answered that, speaking for himself and confidentially, he was convinced that all that Baron Calice had said was true, and his advice sound; but that it would be no easy matter to induce the Sultan to follow it. He alluded to an appeal to the Powers, parties to the Treaty of Berlin; but Baron Calice told him that such a step would inevitably result in the raising of those questions which it is so essential to leave undisturbed.

I have, &c.
(Signed) E. MONSON.